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ABSTRACT

This document provides an update and expanded information on a 1988 survey of Nebraska child care arrangements that was conducted by the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Omaha. An introduction covers purpose and methodology. A section on Nebraska's caregivers addresses Nebraska and U.S. preschool child care rates; characteristics related to the use of preschool child care in Nebraska; classification of Nebraska child care arrangements; comparison of Nebraska Child Care Patterns in 1988 and 1990; and comparative features of child care arrangements. Topics in the section on parents' choices of child care arrangements include characteristics related to type of child care used and the process of choosing among child care options. The section on access to quality child care concerns availability of child care providers; affordability of child care arrangements; and the quality of child care arrangements. The section on Nebraska child care policy discusses policy objectives; increased availability of child care; decreased cost of child care; improved quality of child care; and priorities for the future. Ten references, and appendices on the survey design, methodology, and questionnaire, and the Nebraska Preschool Child Care Policy Workshop, conclude the document. (SAK)

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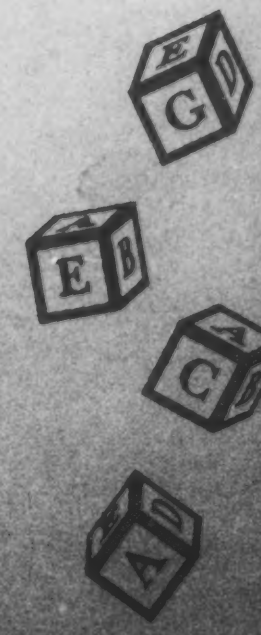

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A Survey Of Parents On Access To Quality Child Care

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Nebraska
Preschool Child Care: 1990

A Survey of Parents on Access to Quality Child Care

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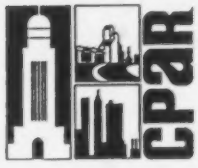
October 1990



Center for Public Affairs Research
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Nebraska Preschool Child Care: 1990
A Survey of Parents on Access to Quality Child Care

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Foreword

In 1988 the Center for Public Affairs Research sponsored a survey of Nebraska child care arrangements. The results of that survey were used in developing a chapter authored by Dr. Christine Reed for *Nebraska Policy Choices: 1988*. The 1988 survey data were also used by a number of organizations working on child care policy, including the Nebraska Unicameral's Health and Welfare Committee.

The 1990 Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey updates and expands the information obtained from the 1988 survey. In addition to publishing this report, CPAR conducted a policy workshop during July to promote utilization of the valuable information collected through the 1990 survey.

As expected, the reaction to Dr. Funk's analysis and findings has been both positive and substantial. In the future, CPAR will continue to periodically update its Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey. Few policy issues hold as much potential to affect the lives of Nebraskans in the future as child care.

On behalf of the Center for Public Affairs Research I want to thank Dr. Patricia Funk for her hard work on this project.

Russell L. Smith, Director
Center for Public Affairs Research

Acknowledgments

The child care research and analysis presented in this report were conducted by the author under contract to the Center for Public Affairs Research (CPAR), University of Nebraska at Omaha. CPAR staff provided excellent technical support and advice in all phases of the project. Many other individuals and agencies contributed valuable information and ideas. The available resources were enhanced substantially by the data files and pre-publication tables provided by the Nebraska Department of Social Services, the State Department of Education and the National Center for Health Statistics. The author greatly appreciates the support and contributions of Rose Meile, Christine Reed and Pauline Zeece in the course of this project. A special thanks to everyone who participated in the workshop on the policy implications of the research findings.

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Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey 1990: A Survey of Parents on Access to Quality Child Care

Introduction

The 1990 Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey was conducted by the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Nebraska parents with preschool children were interviewed in March 1990 about child care arrangements and access to quality child care.

Purpose

Child care emerged as a major public policy issue during the 1980s because of the entrance into the workforce of unprecedented numbers of mothers with preschool children. While debate still continues about the impacts of child care on the welfare of young children, the policy focus as we enter the 1990s is how to ensure adequate sources of quality child care to meet the rising demand from working parents (National Research Council 1990). There are no indications that the economic conditions which have forced many mothers to seek employment will dramatically change in the foreseeable future. Policy makers must assume that the majority of preschool children will be in child care.

Child care policy changes currently are debated at both the state and federal levels. Earlier research indicated that preschool child care arrangements in Nebraska differ in important ways from the national patterns (Reed 1988). The purpose of the 1990 survey was to provide current information to those involved in formulating and implementing child care policies for Nebraska preschool children. It examined the rate of child care use, characteristics of child care arrangements, and parents' views on issues related to access to quality child care. The results of this survey update and expand the information obtained from the 1988 Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey conducted by the Center for Applied Urban Research (now the Center for Public Affairs Research) (Reed 1988; Funk 1990).

Methodology

Professional interviewers administered the telephone survey to a total of 600 parents who had at least one child under the age of six who had not started kindergarten. Respondents were randomly selected from master files compiled by a private market information firm of names and addresses of Nebraska households with preschool age children.

Separate samples of approximately equal numbers of households were randomly selected for each of eight different county groups, classified by population and income characteristics. The population classes were rural, small urban, large urban and metropolitan. Each was subclassified into low income and middle upper income groups.

The purpose of this stratified design was to ensure sufficient numbers of respondents for comparisons of child care characteristics among different residence and income categories. For the two rural and small urban groups that had many counties, a subset of counties was randomly selected to represent the group and then households were randomly selected from the lists for those counties. In order to produce state-wide estimates, the responses were weighted based on each group's estimated proportion of preschool age children in Nebraska. The sampling methodology is discussed more fully in Appendix A.

Interviews were conducted with the parent with the most responsibility for child care, or most knowledge about the child care arrangements for that household. Many of the contacted parents reported that both parents equally shared the child care responsibilities. In such cases the interview was conducted with either parent who was willing to participate. Most respondents were mothers, 18 percent were fathers and 1 respondent was a foster parent.

Slightly different versions of the survey were administered to respondents based on their employment status, but child care information was obtained from both groups. The interview lasted approximately 20 minutes for parents using child care and 10 minutes for other parents. The survey instrument is included as Appendix B.

All data presented in this report are based on the weighted sample. The statewide estimates have a sampling error of 3 to 4 percentage points. Unless otherwise noted, any reported group differences were found to be significant at the 95 percent confidence level or higher.

Who Cares for Nebraska's Children?

One objective of the child care survey was to document the ways in which preschool children in Nebraska receive care. The rates of child care use and patterns of child care arrangements are compared with national norms to provide a broader perspective on Nebraska child care. Characteristics of the different types of child care and factors related to parents' child care choices are presented to provide a better picture of the Nebraska preschool child care system.

Nebraska and U.S. Preschool Child Care Rates

The results of the Nebraska survey show child care rates were substantially above the national norm: an estimated 72 percent of Nebraska preschool children were in a regular child care arrangement in 1990, compared to the national estimate of 62 percent for 1988 (table 1 and figure 1).

A Nebraska child was considered to be in child care if the primary caregiver was employed. This definition applied even if care was provided by the father while the mother worked, or if the mother cared for the child while working at home. If the primary caregiver was not employed, the child was considered to be in child care if someone else cared for the child on a regularly scheduled basis each week.

The estimated national preschool child care rate is based on a recent child health survey (National Center for Health Statistics 1990) and labor force participation rates for mothers of preschool age children (Bureau of Labor Statistics 1988).[1] The definition of

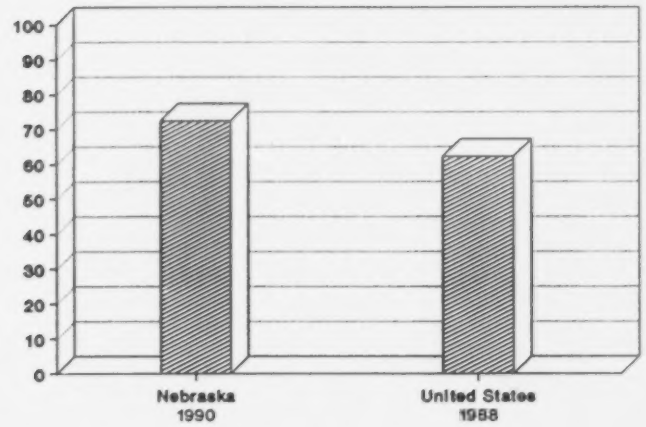
Table 1. Percent in Child Care and Mother's Employment Status: Preschool Children in Nebraska, 1990, and the United States, 1988

	Nebraska 1990*	United States 1988†
Percent of preschool children in regular care arrangement	72.4	62.2
Percent of preschool children with an employed mother	67.4	53.5

*The Nebraska total preschool child care use rates and employment rates for mothers have been adjusted based on significant differences in the average number of preschool children per household between surveyed households with and without an employed mother. No other Nebraska estimates required this adjustment.

†Estimated from data published by National Center for Health Statistics, 1990 and Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1988. See Note 1.

Figure 1. Percent of Preschool Children in Care: Nebraska 1990 and U.S. 1988



child care used by the national survey was comparable to the one used for the Nebraska survey.

The reason Nebraska preschool child care rates were found to be so high was that 67 percent of preschool children in the surveyed households had an employed mother compared to the national estimate of 54 percent. A Nebraska mother was considered to be employed if she worked any hours on a regular weekly basis for pay or for a family business. Seventy-three percent of the mothers classified as employed worked full-time, that is, 35 hours or more a week. Other recent Nebraska data provide employment rate estimates for mothers of preschool age children that are reasonably close to the estimate from this survey.[2]

Characteristics Related to the Use of Preschool Child Care in Nebraska

In Nebraska, several family characteristics were found to be related to whether or not a parent used preschool child care (table 2). The primary determinate of preschool child care use is, of course, the mother's employment status. All preschool children with an employed mother were, by definition, in child care, compared to only 16 percent of those whose mother was not employed. Overall 93 percent of the surveyed preschool children who were in child care had an employed mother. The other family characteristics found to be significantly related to the use of child care were the child's age and annual household income.

Regardless of age, the majority of Nebraska preschool children were in child care, including 57 percent of those under 1 year of age (figure 2). The Nebraska findings do not show the steady age-related increase in child care rates found in the national child health survey (National Center for Health Statistics 1990). In Nebraska, child care rates increased substantially between children less than 1 year of age and those 2 years of age, and then were at a relatively constant, high level across the rest of the preschool age groups.

Household income was related to the use of child care in a somewhat complex manner (figure 3). Children from the poorest households, those with annual incomes of less than $10,000, were the least likely to be placed in child care (50 percent). The majority of these households at the lowest income group were headed by a single, unemployed parent, most of whom did not use child care. However, children in households with incomes of $10,000 to $14,999 were most likely to have an employed mother and, therefore, most likely to be in child care (82 percent).

Table 2. Percent in Child Care by Selected Characteristics: Nebraska Preschool Children, 1990

	Percent in Child Care	Number of Respondents
Mother's employment status:		
Currently employed	100.0	403
Not employed	15.9	188
Age at last birthday:		
Less than 1	56.6	114
1 year old	72.2	143
2 years old	80.8	92
3 years old	77.1	89
4 years old	82.5	115
5 years old (not in school)	76.0	48
Annual household income:		
Less than $10,000	50.1	14
$10,000 - $14,999	81.8	25
$15,000 - $24,999	66.3	146
$25,000 - $34,999	79.9	166
$35,000 and above	77.4	192
Total preschool children	72.4	599

Note: Differences in child care use among groups within each classification are statistically significant at a 95 percent or greater confidence level.

Figure 2. Percent in Child Care by Age: Nebraska Preschool Children, 1990

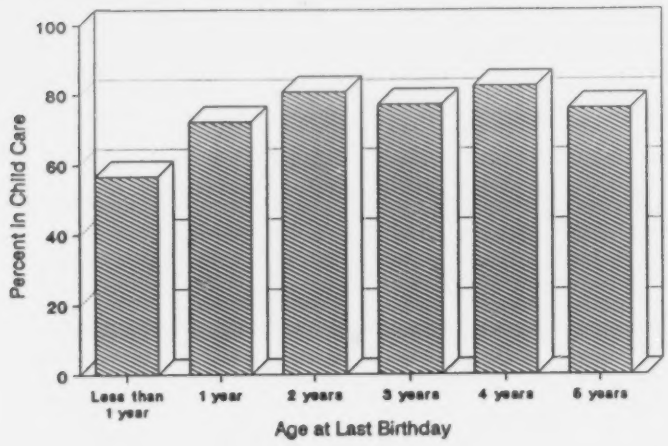
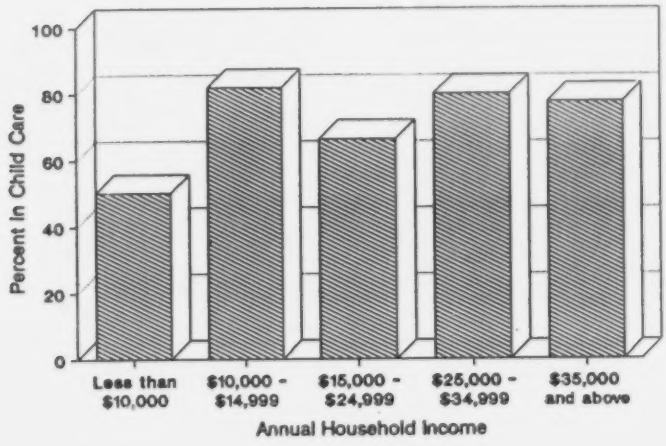


Figure 3. Percent in Child Care by Household Income: Nebraska Preschool Children, 1990



Child care rates dropped off to 66 percent for households with incomes of $15,000 to $24,999 and increased to 79 percent for those in households with incomes of $25,000 and above. In order for a mother to have the option to stay out of the workforce, the father must earn an adequate income. In this survey, the income threshold at which a substantial percentage of mothers in two parent households stayed out of the workforce was in the range of $15,000 to $19,999.

Some children were in child care even though their mothers were unemployed. The highest rate of child care use by unemployed mothers was for those in households earning $35,000 and more (23 percent).

Several other family characteristics were examined but not found to be significantly related to whether or not a parent used child care. The unrelated characteristics included number of parents in the household, number of preschool children, the presence of school age children, and population class of the county of residence.

Differences in Nebraska and U.S. Child Care Arrangements

Nebraska preschool children not only were more likely to be placed in child care than the national norm, but also received different types of care than the national pattern (National Center for Health Statistics 1990) (table 3; figures 4A, 4B). The majority of preschool child care arrangements in Nebraska and in the United States were home-based rather than center-based (day care centers and preschools). However, in Nebraska home-based care represented 79 percent of all the care arrangements, compared to only 66 percent nationally.

In Nebraska, home-based care was more likely to be outside the child's home and provided by a nonrelative than the national norm. Mothers working at home and fathers provided approximately one quarter of the home-based care in both Nebraska and the U.S. However, other relatives provided only 12 percent of home-based care in Nebraska, compared to 30 percent nationally.

Perhaps the most distinctive and important Nebraska child care feature identified by this survey is that 46 percent of all preschool child care arrangements were provided by a nonrelative at a home other than the child's. Nationally, only 21 percent of preschool child care arrangements fell into this category, which generally is referred to as family day care.

Table 3. Primary Child Care Arrangements by Setting and Provider: Preschool Children in Child Care in Nebraska, 1990, and the United States, 1988

	Nebraska 1990	U.S. 1988*
	-Percent Distribution-	
Primary child care arrangements:		
In child's home:		
Mother while working	6.9	4.7
Father	11.5	12.9
Other relative	3.9	8.6
Non relative	4.7	7.6
(Total)	(27.0)	(33.8)
In another home:		
Relative	5.8	11.3
Non relative	46.1	21.3
(Total)	(51.9)	(32.6)
Organized group care:		
Day care centers	17.2	7.8
Preschools	3.2	23.4
(Total)	(20.4)	(31.2)
Other	0.7	2.5
Total	100.0	100.1

**Source:* National Center for Health Statistics, 1990. See note 1.

Figure 4A. Primary Child Care Arrangements by Setting and Provider: Nebraska Preschool Children, 1990

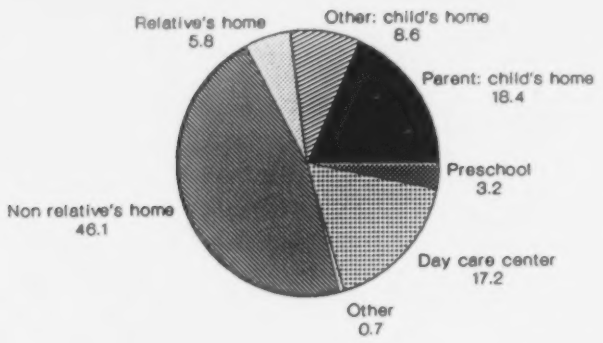
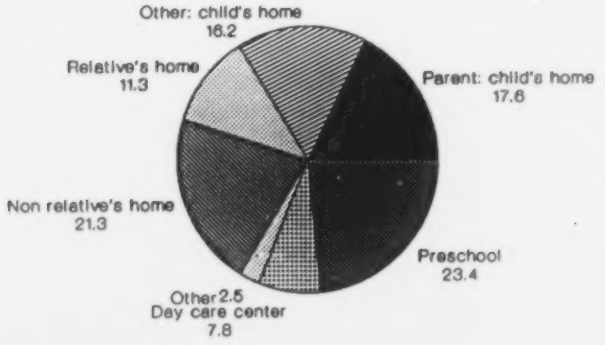


Figure 4B. Primary Child Care Arrangements by Setting and Provider: U.S. Preschool Children, 1988



Nebraska preschool child care also diverges from the national pattern for center-based care arrangements. As was noted earlier, arrangements in Nebraska were more likely to be home-based, and consequently, there was a lower prevalence of center-based care than the national average. Furthermore, day care centers dominated these arrangements in Nebraska, whereas preschools were dominate nationally. The use of day care centers in Nebraska was twice the national average (17 percent vs. 8 percent), while the use of preschools was only a fraction of the national average (3 percent vs. 23 percent).

Some of the Nebraska-U.S. differences in the use of center-based child care may be attributed to different regulations among the states. For example, no Nebraska children below the age of 3 were reported to be attending preschool, whereas 2 year old children may have attended preschools in other states. However, the Nebraska-U.S. differences in preschool attendance were just as large for 4 and 5 year old children as for those 2 and 3 years old.

Some of the differences between the Nebraska and U.S. data on the use of preschools and day care centers also may be due to reporting errors by parents who failed to distinguish correctly between day care centers and preschools. Such errors, however, are unlikely to account for the dramatic differences between the Nebraska and U.S. data.[3] Because the percent of arrangements identified as preschools was so small, and because of questions about the accuracy of classifications, preschools and day care centers have been combined for most of these analyses.

To summarize, Nebraska preschool child care is dominated by family day care homes, unlike the national pattern of home-based care by a relative, or in the child's home, and enrollment in preschools. This may represent a desirable situation, customized to the needs and values of Nebraska parents, or it may reflect inadequate access to quality child care in Nebraska. The rest of this report examines Nebraska preschool child care arrangements in more depth, focusing on parents' views on topics related to their access to quality child care.

Classification of Nebraska Child Care Arrangements

The following child care arrangement categories have been used for this analysis: working parent care, informal home care, registered day care homes, and organized group care centers. Only four categories have been used to classify the primary child care arrangements instead of the more numerous types listed above in the comparison of Nebraska and U.S. child care patterns. The smaller number of categories facilitates comparisons among types of child care, and are nearly identical to the categories used in the 1988 Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey (Reed 1988; Funk 1990).

Respondents who used child care on a regular basis were asked a series of questions to establish the main type of child care arrangement that was used for the selected survey child. The first questions determined whether the care arrangement was in the child's home, another home, a day care center or a preschool. The child care provider and registration status were also obtained for home-based arrangements.

The distribution of the care arrangements for Nebraska preschool children in child care and summary definitions of each child care category are presented in table 4 and figure 5.

Working Parent Care. Nearly one fifth (18 percent) of preschool child care in Nebraska was provided by working parents. This category refers to a parent caring for the child while working at home, or one employed parent caring for the child while the other parent is at work. Both parents, or a single parent, are employed. It has been included as a child care arrangement because some type of care arrangement must be made for a preschool child while the primary caregiver is working.

An arrangement was classified as working parent care when the parent reported that the primary caregiver was employed and that during the hours the primary caregiver worked the child was cared for mainly by the primary caregiver or the employed spouse.

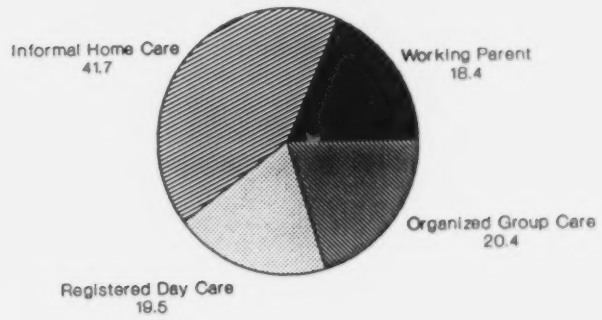
In five percent of the surveyed households that used child care, the preschool child was cared for by a parent who provided informal or registered home care for other children. These arrangements were classified as working parent care rather than informal home care or a registered day care home, in order to maintain a distinction between parental and nonparental care.

Table 4. Primary Child Care Categories and Distribution of Arrangements: Nebraska Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

Type of Care	Definition	Percent of Primary Arrangements	Number of Respondents	Estimated Number of Children*
Working parent	Parent while working, employed parent while spouse is working.	18.4	81	17,000
Informal home care	Non parental, unregistered home-based care	41.7	184	39,000
Registered day care home	Registered family or group day care home	19.5	86	18,000
Organized group care center	Day care centers, preschools	20.4	90	19,000
Total		100.0	441	93,000

*Based on a total of 129,000 preschool children in Nebraska in 1989, estimated from unpublished school census data provided in March 1990 by the Nebraska Department of Education which were adjusted for undercounting.

Figure 5. Primary Care Arrangements by Type of Child Care: Nebraska Preschool Chidren, 1990



Most working parent care was provided by employed parents at home in their off-work hours (table 5). Presumably, the parents' work hours were staggered so that the father provided child care while the mother was working, and vice-versa. Working parent care also was provided by parents while they worked at home, primarily by mothers.

Informal Home Care. Informal home care was predominant (42 percent). It refers to any nonparental, home-based care arrangement that is not registered as a family or group day care home. In this study we classified an arrangement as informal home care when the following conditions were reported by the parent: care was located in a home, the care provider was not a parent, care was provided for only one family, or care was provided for more than one family and the home was not registered.

Any home used for child care can be registered if it complies with regulations, but registration is required only when care is provided for more than three children (excluding the provider's own children) from more than one family. Home care provided without charge or for grandchildren is also exempt from registration requirements. Approximately one fourth of the unregistered home care arrangements should have been registered according to state regulations (table 6). An estimated 9,500 Nebraska preschool children were in illegally operated family day care homes in 1990.

Registered Day Care Home. One fifth of the child care arrangements were in private homes registered with the Nebraska Department of Social Services as family or group day care homes. Registered day care home regulations are primarily for health and safety. Among other conditions they limit the number of children that can be cared for at any one time, based on whether the children are infants, other preschool age, or school age. In general, the limits are eight children in a family day care home and 12 children in a group day care home including the provider's own children under 8 years of age. Group day care homes are required to have at least two care providers when more than 8 children are in attendance. The director of a group day care home is required to have family or group day care home experience or the equivalent of 2 credit hours of training.

In this study we classified an arrangement as a registered day care home if the parent reported: care was located in a home, the caré provider was not a parent, care was provided for more than one family, and the home was registered.

The respondents were asked if a home care arrangement was registered only when care was provided for children from more than one family, since single family care is excluded from the registration requirements. Parents were not asked to differentiate

Table 5. Parent Child Care and Work Relationships: Nebraska Preschool Children in Working Parent Care, 1990

Main Care Provider and Work Relationship	Percent Distribution
Mother working at home:	
Child care provider	27.2
Other home work	7.4
Father working at home	4.9
Employed parents while not at work	60.4
Total	99.9

Table 6. Regulation Status of Unregistered, Informal Home Care Arrangements for Nebraska Preschool Children, 1990*

Regulation Status	Percent Distribution
Registration not required	75.6
Should be registered	24.4
Total	100.0

*Based on parents' reports of characteristics of the care arrangement.

between a registered family and group day care home. Group homes provide only 8 percent of total registered day care home capacity (see table 14).

Organized Group Care Center. Only 20 percent of the main preschool child care arrangements in Nebraska were in an organized group care center, including day care centers and preschools. No parents reported that their child attended a Head Start program, although it was included as a child care category in the survey questionnaire. If a survey child was in a Head Start program, the parent most likely classified the arrangement as a preschool or day care center.

Day care centers are facilities designed and licensed for organized, group child care. Directors are required to have 2 years of organized group care experience or 6 credit hours of relevant training. Teaching staff must have 12 clock hours of inservice training per year.

Preschools are facilities designed and licensed for early childhood education. Directors are required to have the equivalent of 6 credit hours of early childhood education training or 2 years of preschool experience. Teachers are required to have 3 credit hours of training or 1 year of preschool experience. Inservice training is required for the teaching staff.

The ages and number of children that can be cared for at one time in an organized group care facility depends on factors such as space and staff. Classification was based on the parent's report that the child was cared for in a day care center or a preschool.

More than two thirds of children in organized group care centers were in facilities operated by private individuals or corporations (table 7). Churches and other nonprofit organizations operated the facilities attended by 18 percent of these children. Only 8 percent were in facilities provided by the parent's employer, and only 5 percent were in facilities provided by a public school.

Table 7. Types of Operators for Child Care Centers: Nebraska Preschool Children in Organized Group Care Centers, 1990

Operator of Organized Group Care Center	Percent Distribution
Individual	47.5
Corporation	21.3
Employer	8.3
Church	9.5
Other non profit	8.2
Public school	5.1
Other	0.2
Total	100.1

Comparison of Nebraska Child Care Patterns in 1988 and 1990

The basic pattern of preschool child care arrangements in Nebraska changed very little between 1988 and 1990. The 1988 survey separately examined child care for households with employed and unemployed primary caregivers. The distribution of the four main types of child care for preschool children with an employed primary caregiver in this survey (see table 9) was similar to that in the 1988 survey (Funk 1990, table 2). Differences

of no more than 2 percentage points were well within the range of sampling errors for the surveys. We have no direct evidence, however, about changes in the percent of preschool children in child care during that same period because the 1988 survey did not obtain that information.

One difference that emerged was an increase in the proportion of child care provided by friends and neighbors, from 23 percent in 1988 to 36 percent in 1990, with a corresponding decrease in other, nonrelative family day care. One hypothesis for this increase in care provided by friends and neighbors is that as the demand for child care has increased to a very high level in Nebraska, family day care homes have become more localized. Providers who once served families across town, now might be able to find enough clients in their own neighborhood or among their group of friends. If this hypothesis is correct, it implies that child care rates increased substantially between 1988 and 1990.

There is additional, indirect evidence of an increase in the percent of preschool children in child care: the number of registered family day care home positions increased 18 percent, from an estimated 15,500 in 1988 (Reed 1988) to 18,271 in 1990 (see table 14). The increase cannot be accounted for by an increase in the proportion of child care arrangements in registered homes, since that did not change significantly between the 1988 and 1990 surveys. Nor, is there any evidence for an increase in the total number of preschool children in Nebraska during that period. An alternative explanation is that the use of registered day care homes increased by 18 percent between 1988 and 1990 because of a corresponding increase in the percent of preschool children placed in child care during that same period.

Its difficult to believe that child care rates could have increased that dramatically in such a short period of time. One weakness in the estimate is that the number of registered family day care home positions fluctuates considerably from month to month. However, the available data provide indirect evidence of a fairly substantial increase in Nebraska preschool child care rates between 1988 and 1990.

Comparative Features of Child Care Arrangements

In addition to the different characteristics used to define them, child care arrangements vary in a number of other important ways (table 8).

Hours in Care. Preschool children were in their primary child care arrangements an average of 32 hours per week, ranging from 29 hours for informal home care to 36 hours for working parent care. These high hours of attendance reflect the fact that nearly three fourths of the of the working mothers were employed full time.

Distance From Home. Most children who were cared for in arrangements located outside their home did not have to travel far. The average distance in time from home to the care arrangement was reported to be 7 minutes. Children spent the least amount of time traveling to informal care arrangements (6 minutes) and the most traveling to organized group care centers (8 minutes).

Fees. The average fee for paid arrangements was $43 a week. Among fee-based arrangements, organized group care centers averaged $53 a week compared to $40 a week for both informal and registered day care home arrangements. However, 13 percent of informal home care arrangements were provided without charge, primarily by relatives.

Table 8. Selected Child Care Characteristics by Type of Care Arrangement: Nebraska Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

	Type of Care Arrangement				
	Working Parent Care	Informal Home Care	Registered Day Care Home	Organized Group Care Center	Total
Average hours per week in care	35.7	28.9	32.5	32.4	31.5
Average distance from home in minutes	NA	5.8	6.2	8.3	6.6
Average weekly fee for fee-based care	NA	$40	$40	$53	$43
Percent provided without charge	100.0	12.8	0.0	10.5	25.7
Number of children per provider	3.0	2.9	5.0	5.5	3.8
Percent located in child's home	100.0	19.9	1.5	0.0	27.0
Percent in home-based care provided					
By parent	100.0	NA	NA	NA	18.4
By relative	NA	23.4	0.0	NA	9.7
By friend/neighbor	NA	58.5	59.7	NA	36.0
By other	NA	18.1	40.3	NA	15.5
Percent of home care providers with own children in arrangement	NA	24.0	48.8	NA	34.1
Average number of months in current arrangement	23.5	15.7	20.5	16.6	18.3

Note: Differences among types of care, excluding non-applicable items, are statistically significant for each characteristic at a 95 percent or greater confidence level.

Eleven percent of organized group care center arrangements were also provided without charge. These include arrangements subsidized by the Nebraska Department of Social Services and by employers.

Children Per Provider. The number of children per provider averaged 3.8, close the the national average of 3.5 (National Center for Health Statistics 1990). In Nebraska, there was little difference in the number of children per provider for registered day care homes (5.0) and organized group care centers (5.5). Working parent and informal home care arrangements had fewer children per provider (3.0 and 2.9, respectively).

Location of Home-based Care. Most nonparental home care was located in the provider's home. Twenty percent of the informal home care arrangements were located in the child's home compared to less than 2 percent of registered day care home arrangements.

Providers of Home-based Care. More than half the informal and registered home care arrangements were provided by someone who was reported to be a friend or neighbor to the family (59 percent and 60 percent, respectively). However, relatives provided nearly

one quarter of the informal home care but operated none of the registered day care homes.

Provider's Children. Almost half the registered day care home providers had children of their own in the arrangement, compared to one quarter of those providing informal home care.

Months in Care Arrangement. Nebraska preschool child care arrangements were relatively stable; children had been in their primary care arrangement for an average of 18 months. The average time was longest for working parent care (24 months) and registered day care homes (21 months), and the shortest was for informal home care (16 months) and organized group care centers (17 months).

Parents' Choices of Child Care Arrangements

Nebraska parents use a diversity of preschool child care arrangements, ranging from informal home care provided by a family member to licensed preschools with trained staff. The type of care a parent chooses reflects parental resources and preferences as well as the availability of acceptable options. Each type of arrangement can provide quality care that meets the needs or preferences of some parents. However, each type also can be unsatisfactory because the quality of care is poor or it does not meet the parent's needs.

Public policy can address child care needs more effectively when the underlying factors that affect parents' choices of child care arrangements are better understood. The survey examined several aspects of parents' preferences and constraints in their child care choices. The relationships between household characteristics and type of child care reveal the personal circumstances that affected child care decisions. Parents' perceptions of their options and the reasons for their choices show the extent to which choices were based on characteristics and quality of the care arrangement or on various logistical constraints such as cost and convenience.

Characteristics Related to Type of Child Care Used

For those parents who used child care, the type of care arrangement was related to several household characteristics (table 9) and employment patterns (table 10).

Number of Parents in Household. Relatively few of the surveyed parents were single or had an absent spouse. Those single parents who used child care were unlikely to rely on working parent care, since there was no spouse present to provide care while the primary caregiver worked. Their children were more likely than those in two-parent households to be in informal home care and organized group care centers and less likely to be in registered day care homes. Since single parent households tended to have lower incomes than two parent households, informal home care provided by a relative, friend or neighbor for little or no charge may have been the most affordable option.

Number of Preschool Children. Approximately one third of the surveyed parents had more than one preschool child. Those parents were more likely to provide working parent care and less likely to use registered day care homes and organized group care centers. The higher cost of paying for the care of two or more children may have compelled some parents to provide their own child care by working at home or staggering work shifts.

Table 9. Distribution of Child Care Arrangements by Type of Care and Selected Household Characteristics: Nebraska Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

Selected Household Characteristics	Type of Care Arrangement: Working Parent Care	Informal Home Care	Registered Day Care Home	Organized Group Care Center	Total	Number of Respondents
	Percent Distribution					
Number of parents:						
Single parent	2.0	54.6	11.8	31.6	100.0	29
Two parents	19.6	40.8	20.1	19.6	100.1	412
Preschool children:						
One	14.0	40.3	22.9	22.8	100.0	283
More than one	26.4	44.1	13.5	16.0	100.0	158
Schoolage children:						
None	11.6	47.9	18.0	22.5	100.0	192
One or more	23.9	37.0	20.8	18.3	100.0	248
Age at last birthday:						
Less than 1 year	12.2	50.1	18.3	19.4	100.0	64
1 - 2 years old	16.8	45.1	24.5	13.7	100.1	177
3 - 5 years old	21.9	36.0	15.5	26.6	100.0	200
Annual household income:						
Less than $15,000	25.3	47.6	13.9	13.2	100.0	28
$15,000 - $24,999	25.1	44.4	12.2	18.3	100.0	97
$25,000 - $34,999	25.8	33.1	15.4	25.7	100.0	133
$35,000 and above	7.1	43.1	29.3	20.5	100.0	148
Employment status of primary caregiver:						
Employed	19.8	41.9	20.1	18.2	100.0	411
Not employed	NA	38.2	11.5	50.3	100.0	30
Class of county of residence:*						
Rural	12.8	58.1	18.8	10.3	100.0	64
Small urban	18.7	48.2	20.7	12.4	100.0	72
Large urban	18.5	42.7	21.4	17.4	100.1	93
Metropolitan	19.2	35.4	18.5	26.9	99.9	212
Total	18.4	41.7	19.5	20.4	100.0	441

*County classifications:
Rural - no place of 2,500 or more
Small urban - largest place 2,500 to 9,999
Large urban - largest place 10,000 to 49,999
Metropolitan - Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, Lancaster, and Dakota counties.

The distribution of child care arrangements by class of county of residence has been adjusted to conform to the relative capacities of registered family and group day care homes and licensed day care centers and preschools by class of county according to Nebraska Department of Social Services records (see table 14).

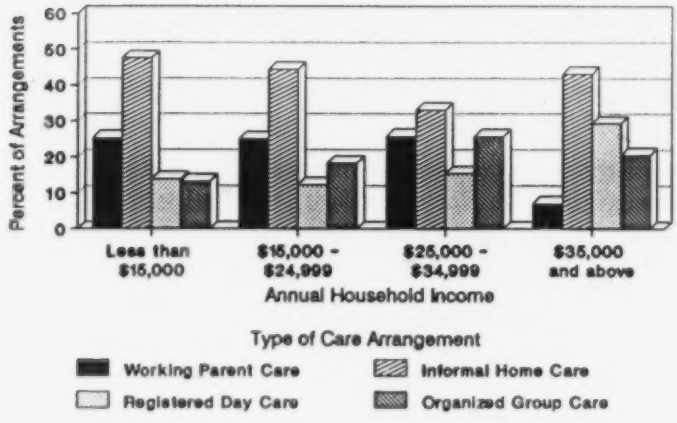
Note: Differences in the distribution of child care arrangements among groups within each classification are significant at a 95 percent or greater confidence level.

Age of Preschool Child. Informal home care was the predominant arrangement for each age group. However, this type of care was most prevalent for those less than 1 years old. Children 1 and 2 years old were more likely than younger or older children to be in registered day care homes. Those 3 years and older were more likely to be in organized group care centers than were younger children.

Presence of School Age Children. The majority of surveyed households had at least one school age child. Those households were more likely to use working parent care and less likely to use informal home care than households with no school age children. If cost was the primary reason for the higher use of working parent care, then one would have expected a reduction in the use of organized group care centers. It may be that school age children, especially older ones, helped in the provision of working parent care, perhaps by taking care of the preschool child during short periods of time when neither parent could be home.

Household Income. Household income level was also found to be related to the type of child care arrangement the parent used (figure 6). In general, the use of working parent and informal home care arrangements decreased with increased household income. Children in households with annual incomes less than $25,000 were more likely than others to rely on informal care and less likely to use registered day care or organized group care. This pattern was strongest for those in households with incomes less than $15,000.

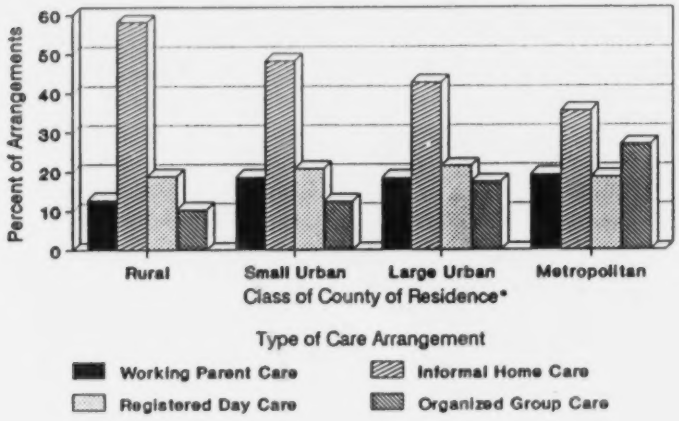
Figure 6. Distribution of Child Care Arrangements by Household Income: Nebraska Preschool Children, 1990



Children in households with annual incomes of $25,000 to $34,999 were less likely than other children to be in informal care arrangements and more likely than others to be in organized group care centers. Children in the highest income households ($35,000 a year or more) were unlikely to be in working parent care and more likely than other children to be in registered day care homes.

Residence. Informal home care was the most prevalent child care arrangement, regardless of the population class of the county of residence (figure 7). However, the use of informal home care was highest in rural counties and decreased with increasing population. There was a corresponding increase in the use of organized group care centers with increasing population. The use of these centers was most prevalent in metropolitan counties.

Figure 7. Distribution of Child Care Arrangements by Class of County: Nebraska Preschool Children, 1990



*See table 9 for definitions of county classes.

Employment Status. Unemployed primary caregivers were unlikely to use child care, but the ones who did use child care were more likely than those who were employed to use an organized group care center.

Part-time, Evening, and Weekend Employment. Employment characteristics of both parents were related to the type of child care used when the primary caregiver was employed (table 10). If at least one parent worked part time the child was more likely than other children to be in working parent care and less likely to be in a registered day care home or an organized group care center. If either parent worked evening or night shifts, or worked weekends, the child was more likely than other children to be in working parent care and less likely to be in an organized group care center.

Part-time employment and evening, night or weekend shifts are patterns which make it easier for two employed parents to share child care responsibilities. These patterns also make it more difficult to use organized group care centers which tend to have fixed, week day operation hours. Part-time employment also limits income and may explain the lower reliance on registered day care homes and organized group care centers.

Self-employment. Self-employment by the mother, but not the father, was also related to the type of child care arrangement. Children whose mothers were self-employed were much more likely to be in working parent care (primarily by the mother while working at home) than children whose mothers worked for someone else.

Table 10. Distribution of Child Care Arrangements by Parent Employment Characteristics: Nebraska Preschool Children with Employed Primary Caregiver, 1990

	Type of Care Arrangement					
	Working Parent Care	Informal Home Care	Registered Day Care Home	Organized Group Care Center	Total	Number of Respondents
	Percent Distribution					
Part-time employment:						
Mother and/or father	32.4	40.9	14.6	12.1	100.0	144
Neither parent	12.7	42.3	23.3	21.7	100.0	264
Evening or night shifts:						
Mother and/or father	25.0	41.5	21.5	11.9	99.9	182
Neither parent	15.8	41.3	19.3	23.6	100.0	225
Weekend shifts:						
Mother and/or father	22.3	43.3	20.4	14.1	100.1	263
Neither parent	15.8	38.1	20.1	26.0	100.0	145
Mother's employment:						
Self-employed	50.7	32.9	5.7	10.8	100.1	69
Employed by other	13.6	43.6	23.6	19.2	100.0	333
Total	19.8	41.9	20.1	18.2	100.0	411

Note: Differences in the distribution of child care arrangements among groups within each classification are significant at a 95 percent or greater confidence level.

Choosing Among Child Care Options

Parents were asked what other child care options, if any, they considered, and if none, what other options would have been available to them. Approximately half the parents said they considered one or more other options (table 11). Most of the other parents reported that other child care options were available but they did not consider them when they made their current child care arrangement. Slightly more than 10 percent reported there were no other child care options available.

Parents using working parent care were least likely to have considered other options that were available. Those using working parent care and organized group care centers were more likely than others to report that no other options were available to them.

Parents chose their child care arrangements for a variety of reasons related to their attitudes about child care quality and various logistical considerations. Some, as we have noted above, believed the one they used was their only option. Parents were asked why they chose the current main child care arrangement instead of any other options that were available to them. The question was open-ended and parents gave as many as three reasons for their choice. Each reason was coded into one of seven categories, four pertaining to the quality of care and three pertaining to logistical aspects of the arrangement (table 11).

For parents who reported they had no other child care options available to them, the reason was coded under the category "nothing else available or suitable." That category also included reasons for not choosing an available option because it was full or not available for the time or circumstances needed.

Table 11. Consideration of Other Child Care Options and Reasons for Choice of Arrangement: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

	Type of Care				
	Working Parent Care	Informal Home Care	Registered Day Care Home	Organized Group Care Center	Total
	Percent Distribution				
Consideration of other child care options:					
Other options considered	28.1	48.7	55.4	56.2	47.7
Other options not considered	57.2	41.3	40.2	29.3	41.7
No other options available	14.6	10.0	4.5	14.5	10.7
Total	99.9	100.0	100.1	100.0	100.1
Reasons for parents' choice of care arrangement:	Percent Who Gave That Specified Reason*				
Quality of care:					
Preferred family member/relative	41.7	11.9	0.0	3.1	13.3
Confidence in provider	4.2	38.6	65.6	30.8	35.9
Individual/small group setting	7.1	24.3	17.4	8.1	16.5
Education/development program	2.9	2.2	6.6	32.7	9.4
Logistics:					
It was the most affordable	35.1	12.2	6.0	6.9	14.2
Location was more convenient	7.7	15.1	15.2	23.1	15.4
Nothing else available or suitable†	20.8	18.5	17.1	20.8	19.2
Summary of reasons:	Percent of All Reasons				
Quality of care	46.8	62.7	70.1	59.5	60.6
Logistics	53.2	37.3	29.9	40.5	39.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Parents gave up to 3 reasons in response to an open-ended question on the reasons for choosing their current child care arrangement instead of any other available options.

†Category includes parents who reported no other child care options were available and those who did not choose other options because they were full, not available for the times needed, or other reasons they did not suit the parent's particular child care needs.

Note: Difference among type of care groups on consideration of other options and for each reason category except "Nothing else available or suitable" were statistically significant at a 95 percent or greater confidence level.

Overall, parents reported their choices were principally based on quality of care reasons (61 percent of all reasons). This pattern applied to all types of care arrangements except working parent care, for which slightly more than half the reasons for choice were logistical.

Reasons given for the choices of care arrangement differed significantly among types of care. The principal reasons given by parents using working parent care were preference for a parent provider and affordability. Informal home care arrangements were chosen because of confidence in the provider, and small group or individual attention. Two-thirds of parents using registered day care homes cited confidence in the provider as a reason for choice. The principal reasons given for choice of organized group care centers were confidence in the provider, education or development program, and convenience of location.

The provider was clearly a key factor in parents' choices of child care arrangements but it is not clear whether that took precedence over other considerations such as the use of home-based care versus organized group care centers. The results suggest that although such logistical factors as cost and convenience played a role in parents' choices of child care arrangements, the quality of the care arrangement in terms of the parents priorities, was the primary consideration.

Access to Quality Child Care

Nebraska parents showed that quality was an important factor in their choices of preschool child care arrangements. However, lack of options, cost and other logistical factors played a role in determining child care choices for some parents. An important public policy issue is whether Nebraska parents have adequate access to quality child care that meets their needs, regardless of their personal circumstances such as income or area of residence.

The survey findings indicate that access to quality child care is a problem in Nebraska. Many parents reported that they had problems in arranging child care, when asked "Did you experience any of the following difficulties in making the current, main child care arrangement for (child's name)?" They responded "yes" or "no" to each problem the interviewer specified. Table 12 lists the problems in the order of reported prevalence.

The most prevalent problems that parents reported pertained to the basic access obstacles of quality, affordability and availability: finding high quality child care (45 percent), finding an affordable arrangement (34 percent), and not enough child care providers (32 percent). Somewhat fewer parents reported problems that pertained to more specific access issues: finding care for an infant, finding care for specific days or hours needed, finding care in a convenient location, and finding care for more than one child. Information related problems were among the least prevalent reported: knowing how to locate care providers and knowing how to choose among options. Parents were asked to identify any additional problems they may have had in making their child care

Table 12. Problems Reported in Making Their Child Care Arrangement: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

	Percent Who Experienced That Problem
Child care arrangement problem:	
Finding high quality child care	45.1
Finding an affordable arrangement	34.1
Not enough care providers	31.8
Finding care for an infant	28.8
Finding care for the times needed	27.4
Finding care in a convenient location	24.2
Finding care for more than one child	19.3
Knowing how to locate providers	19.3
Knowing how to choose among options	15.9

Note: Parents were asked whether or not they had experienced each specified problem, and may have responded affirmatively to more than one. Problems are listed in order of prevalence, not the order of presentation.

arrangement, but the few additional problems that were named could be classified under the listed problems.

The following sections further discuss the basic obstacles in access to quality child care—availability, affordability and quality. The analysis identifies which groups of parents were most likely to experience the different access problems, and how successful parents were in arranging quality child care.

Availability of Child Care Providers

Rural parents and low-income parents reported few child care options. Parents in less populous counties had fewer child care options in terms of the number and types of providers available. Low income parents experienced more personal constraints on their access to child care.

Residence and Child Care Availability

The majority of rural parents said that they experienced a problem with not enough care providers (table 13). This problem was much less prevalent in other counties. The child care facility licensing records of the Nebraska Department of Social Services (DSS) for February 1990 show that licensed day care center positions per preschool child residing in the county was five times higher in metropolitan counties than it was in rural counties (table 14).

Table 13. Percent Who Reported the Problem of Not Enough Care Providers by Class of County: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

	Class of County of Residence*				
	Rural	Small Urban	Large Urban	Metropolitan	Total
Percent who reported not enough care providers	52.6	35.9	36.2	21.2	31.8

*See table 9 for definitions of county classes.

Note: differences among residence groups are statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence level.

The average capacity of day care centers in rural and small urban counties is 33 children. Operating a day care center with fewer children might not be feasible economically. An alternative is registered family or group day care homes. The prevalence of these homes was about the same across county groups (see table 9) and, therefore, they did not offset the lack of day care centers in less populous counties. Consequently, surveyed parents in rural and small urban counties relied more on informal home care arrangements (see table 9).

Income and Child Care Availability

Low income families resided in all county groups, and were no more likely than higher income families to report that there were not enough care providers available. However, nearly a third (31 percent) reported that there was no other child care option available to them when they made their current arrangement, a rate much higher than for other income groups (table 15). The constraint appears to have been a more personal one, with

Table 14. Registered and Licensed Child Care Capacity by Type of Facility and Class of County Where Located

	Class of County Where Facility Is Located*				
	Rural	Small Urban	Large Urban	Metropolitan	Total
Total capacity:					
Family day care home	2,411	3,316	3,311	9,233	18,271
Group day care home	262	435	269	690	1,656
Day care center	939	2,092	3,951	17,703	24,685
Preschool	1,129	1,318	1,137	2,653	6,237
Total	4,741	7,161	8,668	30,279	50,849
Average capacity per facility:					
Family day care home	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.0	7.0
Group day care home	10.9	11.2	11.2	11.1	11.1
Day care center	28.5	35.5	52.7	63.5	55.3
Preschool	13.3	14.0	17.2	27.9	18.3
Total	9.7	10.7	13.8	17.2	14.3
Capacity per 100 preschool children in county:					
Family day care home	13.8	14.8	13.4	14.4	14.2
Group day care home	1.5	1.9	1.1	1.1	1.3
Day care center	5.4	9.3	16.0	27.6	19.2
Preschool	6.4	5.9	4.6	4.1	4.8
Total	27.1	32.0	35.1	47.1	39.5

*See table 9 for definition of county classes.

Note: The information in this table was derived from unpublished data provided by the Nebraska Department of Social Services in February 1990 on the location, type of license and capacity of each registered and licensed child care facility in Nebraska. Estimates of the number of preschool children in each county were based on unpublished 1989 school census data by county which were provided by the Nebraska Department of Education in March 1990, and were adjusted for undercounting.

Table 15. Percent Who Reported No Other Option When Making Their Child Care Arrangement by Household Income: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

	Annual Household Income				
	Less Than $15,000	$15,000-$24,999	$25,000-$34,999	$35,000 and Above	Total
Percent who reported no other options	31.4	11.7	6.7	11.2	11.2

Note: Differences among income groups are statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence level.

many low income parents believing that they could not access child care options generally available in the community.

No relationship was found between DSS supplements and a reported lack of options. More research needs to be done to identify the various constraints low income families face in their access to quality child care.

Affordability of Child Care Arrangements

One third of the parents, as was noted earlier, reported they had problems finding an affordable child care arrangement. Some dealt with the problem by providing their own, working parent care, while others were able to find affordable nonparental care arrangements. Among parents who used nonparental care, only 13 percent said it was difficult or very difficult to afford their current arrangement (table 16).

Table 16. Ratings of Affordability of Current Child Care Arrangement: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Nonparental Child Care, 1990

	Very Easy	Moderately Easy	Moderately Difficult	Very Difficult	Total
	Percent Distribution				
Affordability of current child care arrangement	37.7	49.9	10.2	2.3	100.1

Income and Child Care Affordability

The problem of finding affordable child care was reported equally by all income groups except those with household incomes of $35,000 or more (table 17). Low income families, however, were more likely than others to have problems with their actual child care expenses. Almost one fourth of those with household incomes less than $15,000 found it difficult to afford their current arrangement, a rate nearly twice that of the next highest income group (table 18).

It is of interest that the majority of low income parents did not report difficulty in affording child care. One explanation is that 42 percent of the parents with annual household incomes less than $15,000 received public or private child care assistance, including child care supplements provided by DSS or an employer and care provided without charge, usually by a relative. That level of assistance dropped to 20 percent for households with incomes of $15,000 to $24,999. Table 19 presents the distribution of various types of public and private child care assistance by level of income for parents using nonparental child care.

Table 17. Problems in Finding an Affordable Care Arrangement by Household Income: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Child Care, 1990

	Annual Household Income				
	Less than $15,000	$15,000 to $24,999	$25,000 to $34,999	$35,000 and Above	Total
Percent who reported a problem in finding an affordable care arrangement	41.2	38.3	41.1	25.4	34.1

Note: Differences among income groups are statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

Table 18. Ratings of Affordability of Child Care Arrangement by Household Income: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Nonparental Child Care, 1990

	Affordability				
	Very Easy	Moderately Easy	Moderately/Very Difficult	Total	Number of Respondents
	Percent Distribution				
Annual household income:					
Less than $15,000	31.2	46.2	22.6	100.0	20
$15,000 - $24,999	30.7	56.9	12.5	100.1	70
$25,000 - $34,999	35.6	52.8	11.6	100.0	97
$35,000 and above	43.9	48.0	8.1	100.0	131
Total*	37.7	49.9	12.5	100.1	345

*Includes cases with missing values on income.

Note: Differences in ratings of affordability among income groups are significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

Table 19. Receipt of Public and Private Assistance for Child Care by Household Income: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Nonparental Child Care, 1990

	Type of Assistance*					
	DSS	Employer	No Fee	None	Total	Number of Respondents
	Percent Distribution					
Annual household income:						
Less than $15,000	25.5	0.8	15.3	58.4	100.0	16
$15,000 - $24,999	2.0	6.1	11.9	80.0	100.0	68
$25,000 - $34,999	3.8	11.7	7.3	77.1	99.9	95
$35,000 and above	0.7	8.1	3.0	88.3	100.1	130
Total	3.2	8.4	6.9	81.5	100.0	310

*Type of Assistance:
DSS - Child care supplements from the Nebraska Department of Social Services.
Employer - Financial supplements for child care from either parent's employer.
No fee charged - Care is provided without any charge (usually by a relative).
None - Parent pays fee for child care and receives no DSS or employer supplements.

Note: Too many cells with expected frequencies of less than 5 to test for significant differences among income groups.

The average cost per week (supplemented and free care excluded) increased with income for informal home care and organized group care centers (table 20). Nevertheless, lower income families paid a significantly higher percent of their household income on child care (table 21). The surveyed households with incomes less than $15,000 a year averaged 17 percent of income, before taxes, on preschool child care, more than twice the percent of income spent by households with incomes of $35,000 or more. This pattern of low income families spending less total dollars but a higher percent of income on child care has been found in other studies at a national level (National Research Council 1990).

Table 20. Average Weekly Fees Paid by Type of Care Arrangement and Household Income: Nebraska Preschool Children in Nonsupplemented, Fee-Based Child Care, 1990

	Type of Care Arrangement				
	Informal Home Care	Registered Day Care Home	Organized Group Care Center	Total	Number of Respondents
	——————Dollars——————				
Annual household income:					
Less than $20,000	25	41	44	31	36
$20,000 - $29,999	43	30	44	40	59
$30,000 - $34,999	47	38	43	43	34
$35,000 and above	46	43	62	48	113
Total	41	39	51	43	242

Note: Two-way analysis of variance showed significant main effects for income and type of care arrangement at a 99 percent confidence level.

Table 21. Percent of Annual Household Income Spent on Preschool Child Care by Household Income: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Fee-Based Child Care, 1990

	Annual Household Income					
	Less than $15,000	$15,000 to $24,999	$25,000 to $34,999	$35,000 and Above	Total	Number of Respondents
Percent of income spent on total preschool child care expenses	16.7	10.4	9.6	8.0	9.3	274

Note: Differences among income groups are statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence level.

Quality of Child Care Arrangements

Although many parents reported problems in access to quality child care, most of them gave very positive evaluations to their current preschool child care arrangement. Some small but significant differences in the specific evaluations emerged, based on type of care used and county of residence. No significant relationship was found between income and parents' evaluations of child care quality.

Overall Quality

Parents using nonparental child care were asked to evaluate the quality of their main preschool child care arrangement on a four point scale that ranged from excellent to poor. Parents who reported a problem in finding a high quality care arrangement were less likely than others to give a very positive rating to their current one (table 22). Overall, however, the ratings on quality were very positive.

Table 22. Quality of Child Care Rating by Whether Parent Experienced Any Problems in Finding a High Quality Arrangement: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Nonparental Child Care, 1990

	Parent Ratings on Quality of Current Child Care Arrangement					
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Number of Respondents
	Percent Distribution					
Finding a high quality care arrangement:						
A problem	74.7	21.3	4.0	0.0	100.0	167
Not a problem	84.1	15.9	0.0	0.0	100.0	177
Total	79.6	18.5	1.9	0.0	100.0	344

Note: Differences between the groups are statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence level.

Evaluations of Specific Aspects of Child Care

Quality of care is a very subjective judgment, and general ratings reveal little about the characteristics of the care the child is receiving. A set of questions was designed to obtain more specific and objective evaluations. Parents who used nonparental child care were also asked to evaluate their child's main care arrangement in four areas: health and safety, child nurturing and attention, development and learning readiness, and parent relations.

They were asked to respond to each of 17 evaluative statements by stating: strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. The statements were in the form "In (his/her) main child care arrangement, (child's name)...:," followed by a specific evaluative item, for example, "has suitable toys and games for playing," or "is poorly supervised." Questions were in a mixed order as to the evaluation area and negative or positive wording.

Responses were coded on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 the most positive evaluation (strongly agree to a positive statement, or strongly disagree to a negative statement). An average score was calculated for items in each area to produce four evaluations for each child's main care arrangement. Items were grouped into the four areas for summarizing the evaluation data. The average ratings for each area and the specific items which it included are presented in table 23.

Child care evaluations were very high across all areas. The most positive responses were in the areas of parent relations and health and safety. The two specific items receiving the highest marks were provider reliability and child supervision. The three specific items receiving the lowest ratings were the amount of quality time with the care provider, the provider's medical emergency skills, and exposure to serious infectious disease. However, even the lowest ratings were at a fairly positive level.

Evaluations by Type of Care

There were no significant differences in the ratings of overall quality based on the type of care arrangement. Some significant differences, however, were found by type of care in parents' specific evaluations (table 24).

Table 23. Ratings for Specific Aspects of Child Care Arrangement: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Nonparental Child Care, 1990

Evaluation Items	Average Ratings (1=very negative, 4 = very positive)
Health and Safety:	
Is given nutritious meals and snacks	3.59
Is poorly supervised*	3.64
Is cared for by someone with adequate medical emergency skills	3.27
Has safe play areas and equipment	3.47
Might be exposed to a serious infectious disease*	3.27
(Average rating)	(3.46)
Child Nurturing and Attention:	
Receives a lot of affection and nurturing	3.54
Lacks enough quality time with the care provider*	3.22
Is sometimes mistreated by other children*	3.28
(Average rating)	(3.36)
Child Development and Learning Readiness:	
Has suitable toys and games for playing	3.57
Spends too much time watching T.V.*	3.29
Gets enough physical exercise	3.42
Is learning how to get on well with other children	3.39
Is developing basic skills for learning readiness	3.30
Is exposed to values which conflict with family's values*	3.45
(Average rating)	(3.39)
Parent Relations:	
Is cared for by someone with different attitudes about child rearing and discipline*	3.36
Is care for by someone who keeps parent well informed and involved in the care arrangement	3.55
Is cared for by someone who is unreliable*	3.70
(Average rating)	(3.54)

Note: Parents were asked to indicate whether they "Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree" to each evaluation item, which began with the the phrase, "In his/her main child care arrangement, (child's name):"

*Responses to negatively worded items were recoded so that for each item a score of 1 is the most negative rating, and 4 is the most positive.

Table 24. Evaluations of Child Care Arrangements by Type of Child Care Currently Used: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Nonparental Child Care, 1990

	Type of Care Arrangement			
	Informal Home Care	Registered Day Care Home	Organized Group Care	Total
	Average Ratings (1 = very negative, 4 = very positive)*			
Evaluation area:*				
Health and safety	3.47	3.46	3.42	3.46†
Child nurturing and attention	3.46	3.35	3.15	3.36‡
Development and readiness	3.31	3.44	3.49	3.39‡
Parent relations	3.53	3.62	3.48	3.54†

*See table 23 for the specific items that comprise each evaluation area.

†Differences among types of care groups for these evaluation areas are not statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

‡Differences among type of care groups for these evaluation areas are statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence level.

Organized group care centers were rated lower than others in child nurturing and attention. This evaluation area included items on the amount and quality of attention the child received from the provider and treatment by other children.

Informal home care arrangements were rated lower than others on child development and learning readiness. It was somewhat surprising that registered day care homes were rated only slightly lower than organized group care centers in this area since parents did not give that characteristic as a reason for choosing registered day care homes. The evaluation items, however, included characteristics that are not exclusive to formal development and learning readiness programs, for example, age-appropriate toys and play activities.

Overall, parents' evaluations and reasons for their choices of child care reveal the strengths and weaknesses they perceive in the three types of nonparental child care. The trade-off is between individual attention and nurturing by someone in whom the parent has confidence (including relatives, friends and neighbors), and a larger, group care center offering an organized child care and development program by trained providers. Registered day care homes may represent a satisfactory compromise between the two in parents' eyes: small group care provided by someone in whom the parent has confidence, and organized for some general child development goals.

Residence and Quality of Child Care

There were no differences by residence in parents' ratings of the overall quality of their child care. However, there were small but significant differences by county of residence in the specific evaluations of the four areas of child care (table 25). Ratings by rural parents were the lowest of any group in each of the four specific areas. The criteria parents use in judging overall quality in child care may differ from the specific evaluation items used in this survey. On the other hand, the overall quality rating may be a poor measure of parents' attitudes about their care arrangement. The findings about the relative quality of child care in rural counties are inconclusive and suggest the need for more objective assessments of the quality of preschool child care in Nebraska.

Table 25. Evaluations of Child Care Arrangements by Class of County of Residence: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children in Nonparental Child Care, 1990

	Class of County of Residence*				
	Rural	Small Urban	Large Urban	Metropolitan	Total
	Average Ratings (1 = very negative, 4 = very positive)				
Evaluation area:†					
Health and safety	3.31	3.54	3.57	3.48	3.46
Child nurturing	3.27	3.54	3.40	3.33	3.36
Development and readiness	3.25	3.42	3.42	3.46	3.39
Parent relations	3.38	3.59	3.63	3.56	3.54

*See table 9 for definitions of county classes.

†See table 23 for the specific items that comprise each evaluation area.

Note: Differences among county groups for each evaluation area are statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

Implications for Nebraska Child Care Policy

The primary objective of this survey was to provide information to those who formulate and implement Nebraska preschool child care policy. This section of the report identifies some policy implications of the survey findings. More comprehensive, recent analyses of Nebraska child care and early childhood education policies are available in the 1988 and 1989 issues of *Nebraska Policy Choices* (Reed 1988; Kluender and Egbert 1989; Finkler and Robinson 1989) and a Nebraska Legislature child care task force report (Nebraska State Legislature 1988). A comprehensive review of child care policy in the United States, including comparisons among states on child care regulations, is presented in *Who's Caring for America's Children* (National Research Council 1990).

The Center for Public Affairs Research invited Nebraskans involved in the formulation and implementation of Nebraska child care policy to participate in a workshop held in Lincoln on July 18, 1990. The purpose of the workshop was to present the preliminary findings of this survey to the participants and to obtain their feedback on the implications for child care policy. The participants identified a number of important policy needs and options, many of which have been included in the discussion that follows. The views expressed here, however, are those of the author and not necessarily those of the workshop participants. A list of workshop participants is included as Appendix C.

Policy Objectives

Access to affordable, quality child care is the generally accepted goal of child care policy. But the obstacles to be overcome and the means to reach that goal vary considerably among families living under different economic conditions and in different geographic, social and cultural circumstances. The findings of this survey suggest the following broad objectives for preschool child care policy in Nebraska, to be pursued by both public and private sector initiatives:

- Give financial assistance to parents who provide their own child care;
- Increase opportunities for working parent and nonparental care arrangements in the child's home;
- Support the establishment and economic viability of family day care homes;
- Encourage the private sector and public schools to establish and support child care facilities;
- Increase the number and type of child care options in rural areas;
- Insure access to more child care options for low income families;
- Provide more assistance to low and moderate income families in paying for child care;
- Encourage the registration of more family day care homes;
- Provide training and services to upgrade the professional status and quality of family day care homes.

More Available Child Care

The supply of preschool child care arrangements in Nebraska does not fully meet the current high level of demand by parents. This poses the danger that some parents may be compelled to use child care arrangements that are not in the best interest of the child or parent. Policy makers should consider opportunities for reducing the level of demand as well as a variety of options for increasing the supply of quality child care.

Demand for Child Care

Most of the Nebraska mothers surveyed worked more than they would have preferred (table 26). Nearly a third of employed mothers would have preferred not to work at all before their child started to school. Almost half the mothers who were employed full time would have preferred to work part time. On the other hand, one fourth of unemployed mothers ideally would have liked to work, most of them part time. Overall the data suggest there would be a substantial reduction in the demand for child care if mothers could have their preferred employment status.

Most policy makers agree that parental child care is usually preferable for preschool children, especially during the first one or two years. There is also agreement that the demand for child care is likely to stay at its current level or higher (National Research Council 1990). There are some policy measures, however, that could reduce the demand for child care at the margins, and help the availability problem in a small way.

One policy option would be to provide some type of tax credit or exemptions for parents who provide their own child care, regardless of their employment status. Parents who stay out of the labor force, or who work part time in order to share child care responsibilities with a spouse, make considerable financial and career sacrifices compared to uninterrupted full time employment. Tax assistance in the amount of hundreds of dollars would enable a few parents to reduce or eliminate employment in order to provide parental child care. Much higher amounts, however, would be required to have a sizable impact on parental employment.

If assistance is to be given to parents who provide their own child care, then it needs to be targeted to need, with greatest assistance going to households with the lowest incomes and the youngest children. Such a policy is contrary to regulations which require single parents receiving Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) to seek job training and

Table 26. Preferred Employment Status Under Ideal Circumstances by Current Employment Status: Nebraska Mothers of Preschool Children, 1990

	Preferred Employment Status				
	Full Time	Part Time	No Employment	Total	Number of Respondents
	Percent Distribution				
Current Employment Status:					
Full time	24.6	43.7	31.7	100.0	215
Part time	5.1	66.0	28.9	100.0	103
Not employed	8.5	15.8	75.7	100.0	163
Total	15.0	39.1	45.9	100.0	481

Note: differences among current employment status groups statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence level.

employment when they have children as young as 6 months old. A more appropriate age level should be established, below which all parents with financial need are given some assistance in providing their own parental child care.

Another policy option would be to encourage employers to offer better opportunities and benefits for parents who wish to work part time. As noted earlier in this report, preschool children were more likely to be in working parent care when at least one parent worked part time, than when both parents worked full time. On the other hand, an increase in the percent of employed parents who worked part time could cause further difficulties for home care providers who must struggle to maintain adequate numbers of children on a full-time equivalent basis without exceeding their regulated capacity.

Types of Child Care Wanted

The demand for child care, as we have noted, is not likely to be reduced substantially regardless of the policies that might be feasibly implemented. This means that we need to increase the supply of quality child care options for parents, especially those living in more rural areas of Nebraska. One issue is what types of child care options do we want to increase: informal care provided in the child's home, family day care homes, day care centers or preschools?

Nebraska child care is currently dominated by unregistered and registered day care homes, rather than day care centers and preschools. The parents surveyed apparently would like to maintain the distinctive pattern in Nebraska preschool child care arrangements as compared to the national norm (see table 3). Policies aimed at increasing the supply of child care through day care centers and preschools—whether provided by employers or by public schools—would not, by themselves, provide the kinds of care many parents are seeking.

In the survey, parents who used child care or who indicated they would like to use it, were asked what their ideal care arrangements would be. Table 27 presents the distribu-

Table 27. Ideal and Current Child Care Arrangements: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children, 1990

	Preschool Child Care Arrangements:	
	Current	Ideal*
	-Percent Distribution-	
Child care arrangement:		
Parent while working	7.6	9.2
Spouse	10.8	11.9
Other relative	9.7	8.6
In child's home†	4.7	14.7
Friend/neighbor's home	33.2	18.4
Other day care home	12.9	11.8
Day care center	17.2	17.0
Preschool	3.2	7.5
Other	0.7	1.0
Total	100.0	100.1

*Child care arrangements under ideal circumstances based on responses from all respondents currently using child care and those who would like to have their child in care.

†For current arrangements, a non-relative in child's home; for ideal arrangements a non-relative or non-specified provider in child's home.

tion of parents' ideal and current arrangements. Compared to their current arrangements, more parents wanted care provided in the child's home, and fewer wanted home care provided by friends or neighbors. Such a change would involve about 15 percent of all care arrangements. There was little difference between current and ideal arrangements in the prevalence of family day care homes (other than friend's or neighbor's) and day care centers. Twice as many parents considered preschools to be the ideal arrangement than those who were using it as the primary one, but only 8 percent of all parents listed it as an ideal care arrangement. Overall, the differences between current arrangements and parents' ideal arrangements were not very dramatic.

Access to Child Care in the Home

Helping more parents to have child care provided in their homes as they prefer would be a difficult policy task, especially if it is nonparental care. Increased opportunities for part-time employment would enable more parents to provide working parent care, through staggered work schedules. At the least, it could reduce the time spent in out-of-home care. More home-based employment would also serve that purpose, assuming that the parent could provide child care while working at home.

The encouragement of home-based employment for the purposes of child care should be approached with caution. We need to know more about the conditions under which this type of child care arrangement is desirable and when it presents an unhealthy situation.

Increasing parents' access to babysitters and nannies who provide care in the child's home would be a difficult policy objective. This type of care is typically more expensive because the provider usually is working for only that family. Only a few surveyed children were cared for in their own home by someone other than a parent and with children from other families. However, state child care agencies and associations could assist families who wish to make such collaborative arrangements.

Access to Family Day Care

A child care access priority should be a greater supply of family day care, the most prevalent and preferred form of child care in Nebraska. Registered day care homes offer the best potential for increased access to family day care because they serve more children on average than unregistered day care homes, are regulated for health and safety and are more accessible to any child care support and training programs the state might implement.

A major problem is the poor earnings from family day care. A provider caring for three children at $40 per week earns less than minimum wage and receives no social security, health insurance or other benefits. Gross income from caring for 7 children at $40 a week would be $14,000 a year with considerable expenses and no benefits. Participants in the policy workshop identified a number of additional obstacles to operating a family day care home: long hours, fluctuating numbers of children and hours in care, low status, isolation, no backup support or time off, and difficulties or negative attitudes pertaining to regulation.

Nearly half the registered day care home arrangements surveyed included the provider's own child(ren). It was noted at the policy workshop that many of these providers operate their business as a way to work full time without needing child care,

and intend to seek other employment when the youngest child starts to school. There is a need to attract individuals who view operating a family day care home as a long term and professional business venture.

Family day care home associations are beginning to provide assistance with problems of isolation and support. The state could provide leadership and assistance to associations and other child care organizations in their outreach and support efforts. These organizations could also minimize the obstacles to meeting state regulations by helping individuals through that process.

One approach to the related issues of low earnings and status would be to upgrade the professional qualifications of family day care home operators through training and certification. Whether parents who currently use family day care would be willing or able to pay higher rates for more professional child care is not known. Clearly parent education must be a component of any such program. It is also unlikely that rates could be raised without subsidies provided either to the provider or the parent. These issues are discussed more in the sections on affordability and quality issues.

Access to Day Care Centers and Preschools

Day care centers at the workplace may attract and keep employees with preschool children, but few employers currently offer this service. In the Nebraska survey, only 8 percent of organized group care arrangements, or less than 2 percent of all care arrangements, were in facilities operated by employers. Although most parents, especially those in rural and small urban counties, work at businesses too small to offer such a facility, there is still a considerable potential for growth in employer-operated child care.

Public schools might extend before and after school programs for school age children to include preschool child care. In rural areas where day care centers and preschools may not be available, schools may have underutilized facilities and space with potential for preschool child care.

Opportunities for employers and public schools to offer or support family day care in private homes should not be overlooked. Nebraska parents show a strong preference for home-based child care. Consistent with this, both employers and public schools could, through contractual arrangements, help ensure the availability of high quality day care homes. Public schools, for example, could link such homes to early childhood education programs and other forms of support.

Child Care Availability in Rural Areas

Rural counties have fewer registered and licensed child care positions per child than more populous counties because of fewer and smaller day care centers (see table 14). Even in rural counties, day care centers have an average licensed capacity of 29 children, a size few rural communities could support. One option is to provide organized group care to smaller numbers of children in conjunction with some other service. Many rural schools have excess capacity, especially where schools have been consolidated across communities, and could provide both physical and human resources for preschool child care and early childhood education. Other rural institutions which should be considered as potential child care providers are churches (for nonsectarian collaboration), senior citizen centers, hospitals and nursing homes.

Family day care homes are scaled better than day care centers to the size of rural communities, and any state-wide effort to increase their availability should pay particular attention to rural communities. Support from associations of family day care homes is particularly critical in rural communities where providers may feel isolated, or have problems with state regulations. Again, institutionally supported child care, such as provided by employers and schools, should include family day care home options for parents who prefer home-based to center-based child care. Individual small businesses could do little on their own, but local business associations such as chambers of commerce or economic development groups could help maintain the supply of quality child care by sponsoring family day care homes and other child care facilities through financial subsidies and other types of support.

Child Care Availability for Low Income Families

Many of the low income parents surveyed reported they had no other available options when they made their current child care arrangements (see table 15). Poverty is likely to accentuate the ordinary obstacles parents must face in arranging child care. Cost is only one of these obstacles. Rural or metropolitan area residence, access to transportation, marital status, number and ages of children, employment status, work shift and days and hours, and integration into the community are circumstances that can affect the type and severity of child care problems for low income families.

Organizations and agencies which currently provide assistance to low income families in arranging child care need to be expanded and strengthened. In addition we need better information about the child care needs of low income families in different circumstances.

More Affordable Child Care

Child care affordability appears to be a problem for all but the upper income parents in Nebraska, but is most acute for those with low income. Of parents with annual household incomes less than $35,000, more than 40 percent reported they had a problem finding an affordable child care arrangement (table 17). For parents who received no public or private child care assistance, average weekly child care payments increase with household income (table 20). Yet low-income parents still paid a higher percent of their household income on child care than did middle and upper income households (table 21) and were more likely than others to report that it was difficult to afford their current arrangement(table 18).

The problem of affordable child care faced by many Nebraska parents cannot be addressed without concerns for the generally poor earnings of child care providers. Earnings will have to increase substantially if we are to achieve the supply of quality child care parents need. Either more assistance needs to be given low and moderate income families to pay for higher rates, or providers must be subsidized directly to help keep rates affordable.

Family Subsidies

Low income families in Nebraska receive child care assistance through programs administered through the Department of Social Services (DSS). Most of this funding comes through the federal Title XX social services block grant and Title IV-A job training and support programs. Families who receive Aid to Dependent Children support, who

qualify by low income level, or who are in a Title IV-A job training placement support program receive full market rate child care benefits. Other needy families who have somewhat higher incomes or who are in employment transition receive partial support. The state of Nebraska supplements the federal funding in order to meet the actual costs of these assistance programs.

In most cases DSS contracts with the provider who then bills DSS directly for the actual hours of child care provided. Providers must be "approved" by DSS, but not necessarily registered or licensed. Unregistered, informal home care arrangements, including care provided by a relative, are considered for approval if they are not required by statute to be registered. DSS offices maintain lists of approved providers but clients may submit another preferred provider for consideration.

This type of family assistance could be expanded to a more comprehensive child care voucher system for low and moderate income parents if the problem of identifying qualified vendors could be reduced. As it stands, unregistered homes must currently be screened to determine whether they meet standards of approval. If most family day care homes in Nebraska were registered it would be easier to determine which vendors qualify.

Whatever the mechanism used to assist low income families, there is a need to expand the current system to include those low income families who currently do not meet the income criteria for assistance and are unlikely to receive child care benefits from employers. In particular, the child care need of families with incomes in the range of $10,000 to $20,000 need to be examined.

The current federal tax credit for child care, while less regressive than an exemption policy, could be better targeted to low and moderate income families. Tax credits could range from 10 to 50 percent of expenses based on income, instead of the current 20 to 30 percent, and be refundable for those families whose tax liabilities are less than the credit. Additional assistance could still be provided to the lowest income families, as currently is the practice.

Although employers, especially those in tight labor markets (for example, telemarketing) might offer child care subsidies to attract and keep employees, the private sector is unlikely to be an adequate source of child care subsidies. Parents with the greatest need for assistance are the least likely to have the type of employment which would offer child care benefits, that is, employment which is full time, permanent and moderate to high paying.

High quality, better paid child care is a national need, not a problem limited to a specific economic sector nor even to the parents of preschool children. Society as a whole has a stake in the quality of care our young children receive. Subsidies to low and moderate income families should come from state and federal government. Revenues to support this assistance, however, could come from corporate taxes, since employers would directly benefit from better employee access to quality child care.

Provider Subsidies

Direct subsidy of child care providers through tax benefits and other forms of financial assistance could also contribute to accessible child care. Anything less than a universal subsidy for all types of child care would have the effect of supporting one type of care over another. Selective subsidies, of course, could encourage registration or specific types of quality programs. The state could subsidize, through direct payments or tax credits, the

additional cost to providers for certain desired features. However, such a policy might arbitrarily discriminate against some high quality child care arrangements and reduce parents' options in their choice of child care.

A combination of universal subsidy in the form of a tax benefit for all legally operating child care providers, and direct financial assistance to family day care home operators for implementing quality program features would improve affordability and quality of child care without distorting the market unduly.

Higher Quality Child Care

The overall quality of child care in Nebraska may be good. Nearly half the parents reported that they had trouble finding high quality child care, but most rated their current arrangement good or excellent (see table 22). It's clear that parents judge some of the existing child care operations to be less than high quality. The fact that few were critical of their current arrangement means either that poor quality child care operations don't stay in business very long, or that parents are reluctant to be critical of an arrangement they feel compelled to use, or a combination of both situations.

Two policy options which would help insure the quality of child care are regulating a greater proportion of family day care homes and increasing training for child care providers. Nebraska parents' concerns about the quality of child care are reflected in their broad support for such measures.

Registration Requirements for Family Day Care Homes

While many aspects of child care quality cannot be regulated, some basic features which contribute to the quality of care can be regulated (National Research Council 1990). Registration of family day care homes provides an essential mechanism for regulation. The issue in Nebraska is which day care homes should be registered and thereby regulated.

The survey interviewer asked each parent "Do you think registration should be required for everyone who provides child care in their home?" Those who said "no" or "depends" were then asked "When should registration be required?"

The majority of parents said all home care providers should be registered (56 percent). while the rest gave a variety of criteria for requiring registration (table 28). Responses were coded as more stringent, similar, less stringent, or not directly comparable to current regulations on registration criteria (four or more children other than the providers' children , from more than one family, excluding care provided by grandparents and care provided without charge).

- A response was considered *more stringent* than the current regulations if it specified that all home care providers or those who cared for 2 or 3 children should be registered.
- A response was considered to be *similar* to current regulations if it would require registration when care is provided for at least 4 children, for children from more than one family, or by a nonrelative.

- A response was considered to be *less stringent* if it would require registration when care is provided for 5 or more children or for children from three or more families, or if it indicated that registration should never be required.
- Responses which were *not comparable* included "don't know" statements and those that would require registration when a certain, unspecified number of children are in care, or when care is provided as a business.

Table 28. Suggested Criteria for Requiring Registration of Day Care Homes: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children, 1990

Criteria for Required Registration	Percent of Responses
All day care homes	55.6
Number of children in care:	
2 or 3	2.6
4	5.0
5	7.0
6 or more	8.3
Unspecified number	5.6
Other criteria	5.1
Don't know what criteria	9.3
No required registration	1.5
Total	100.0

The majority of parents (58%) specified criteria more stringent than current regulations, primarily by responding that all home care providers should be registered. Only 17 percent specified less stringent criteria, while the rest of the responses were similar to or not comparable to current regulations.

Responses about registration differed among parents according to the type of care they were using (table 29). Those using organized group care centers were most likely to want more stringent criteria, and those using informal (unregistered) home care were most likely to want less stringent ones. However parents using informal home care were still likely to propose criteria that were more stringent than current regulations. Parents using informal home care showed the greatest diversity of opinion about day care home registration.

Parents from rural and small urban communities also showed less support than others for more stringent registration requirements (table 29). However, twice as many proposed more stringent criteria as proposed less stringent criteria than current regulations.

Only one fourth of rural parents supported less stringent regulation of family day care homes. This does not support recent attempts to relax registration criteria for rural counties. A child care bill recently passed by the state legislature and vetoed by the Governor would have raised from 3 to 5 the maximum number of children outside the provider's family who could be cared for in an unregistered day care home. Although rural parents appeared less likely than others to oppose this proposed change, supporters of less stringent regulations were in the minority even in rural counties.

Supporters of reduced registration requirements argue that registration inhibits the establishment of family day care homes in rural counties. State licensing records, however,

Table 29. Day Care Home Registration Criteria in Comparison to Current Regulations, by Type of Child Care Used: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children, 1990

	Parents' Registration Criteria Compared to Current Regulations				
	More Stringent	Similar to Current	Less Stringent	Not Comparable	Total
	Percent Distribution				
Type of child care used:					
Child not in care	62.5	10.5	10.1	16.8	100.0
Working parent	62.5	3.9	18.8	14.8	100.0
Informal home	38.3	5.7	29.1	26.9	100.0
Registered home	67.7	4.2	14.3	13.8	100.0
Organized group	77.3	8.1	4.9	9.7	100.0
County of residence:*					
Rural	44.9	8.2	25.2	21.8	100.1
Small urban	51.1	2.8	22.7	23.4	100.0
Large urban	63.7	3.4	14.4	18.6	100.1
Metropolitan	64.8	8.2	13.9	13.0	99.9
Total	58.1	6.9	16.9	18.1	100.0

*See table 9 for definitions of county classes.

Note: Differences among type of care groups and among county groups both statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence level.

show that rural counties have as many registered family day care home positions per preschool child as other counties (table 14). This suggests that registration criteria are not a greater obstacle in rural counties than elsewhere. If that were the case, then there would be a need to modify the regulations imposed by registration, rather than to remove all regulation.

On the other hand, rural counties need a greater prevalence of family day care homes because their lower population densities cannot support the larger day care centers that are found in more populous counties. Public and private sector should coordinate their efforts to support high quality family day care homes in rural counties.

Nebraska ranks below average compared to other states in family day care home regulation standards (Reed 1988; National Research Council 1990). Throughout the state the majority of Nebraska parents of preschool children would support more stringent regulations for family day care homes.

Training of Child Care Providers

Aspects of high quality child care which cannot be regulated can be enhanced through appropriate training of child care providers. Recent attempts have been made at both the state and national levels to upgrade training for child care providers. In Nebraska particular attention has been given to home care providers, a group not currently required to have any special training. This survey questioned parents on whether or not training should be required on a variety of child care topics in order to identify their priorities for a training curriculum.

All parents, including those not currently using child care, were asked their opinions on child care provider training requirements. Interviewers told them that the state of Nebraska may soon offer a variety of short training courses for child care providers, and

asked them to choose whether they thought each of 12 child care topics should be required training or optional training for anyone who provides care for other people's children.

The 12 topics included the areas of health and safety, child management and communication, parent relations, and child development. The responses to these items, which were presented in a mixed order, show a clear hierarchy in parents' child care priorities (table 30).

The average percent wanting to require training in each area were: health and safety (92 percent), child management and communication (86 percent), parent relations (79 percent), and basic child development (73 percent). Two more specialized child development topics received lower requirement ratings: special needs of developmentally handicapped children (42 percent) and providing multicultural experiences (38 percent).

Parents' priorities for provider training were very clear. For example, all health and safety topics were rated higher than the child management and communication topics, which in turn were rated higher than all the child development topics. Yet two-thirds or more of parents believed training should be required in all but the two most specialized of topics.

This strong support for child care provider training is of particular importance given the fact that only one-fifth of surveyed children in child care were in care that required provider training (day care centers and preschools). Most parents stated some type of training should be required regardless of the type of care they currently were using. Although these same parents gave very high evaluations to their own child care arrangement, they implied that quality of care could be improved through training. Parents' priorities for training, as indicated in this survey, may suggest ways to structure any statewide programs for training and certification.

Table 30. Percent Who Said Training Should be Required of All Child Care Providers by Child Care Topic: Nebraska Parents of Preschool Children, 1990

Child Care Topics	Percent Who Want Required Training
Health and safety:	
CPR and other emergency first aid	96.1
Safe indoor and outdoor activity areas	92.5
Infectious disease control	90.4
Preparing nutritious meals and snacks	87.3
(Average health and safety)	(91.6)
Child management/communication:	
Communicating with children	87.0
Child supervision and management	85.7
(Average child management/communication)	(86.4)
Parent involvement and communication	78.5
Basic child development:	
Choosing age appropriate toys & activities	78.4
Observing & assessing early childhood development	71.7
Development of infant and early childhood programs	67.8
(Average basic education/child development)	(72.6)
Other child development:	
Special needs of developmentally handicapped children	42.2
Providing multicultural experiences	37.5

The preceding section established that opinions varied widely as to when family day care homes should be required to register. No such variation was reflected in opinions about provider training. Some parents would require training but not registration for all home home care providers. From a policy standpoint, that might be difficult to implement. On the other hand, a voluntary training certification program, not tied to registration might be welcomed by both parents and providers.

Priorities for the Future

Child care has become a fact of life for the majority of Nebraska families with preschool children. Many parents face availability, affordability or quality problems in their access to child care. Parents with low incomes and rural parents are more likely than others to have child care problems and more intensive research is needed on the problems encountered by them and other parents with special child care needs.

Most of the policy options to improve access to affordable, quality child care would require substantial amounts of public funds. The seemingly intractable federal deficit, limited state resources, and economic trends have been obstacles to moving ahead on child care policy initiatives. The issue becomes one of public priorities: how are we going to spend and invest the resources available to us?

Children must receive quality care during infancy and early childhood. We cannot afford to let economic changes jeopardize any child's future. As more and more preschool children receive nonparental care outside the home, Nebraskans must decide what public policy measures are essential to insure that all of our young children receive the quality of child care they need and deserve.

Endnotes

[1]The national data pertain to all children under the age of 6, including those who attended kindergarten or elementary school. Child care for those children was defined as some arrangement in addition to school attendance. The national child health survey (National Center for Health Statistics 1990) estimated that 60 percent of U.S. children under the age of 6 years were in child care in 1988. That rate was adjusted by this author to 62 percent based on an estimate that 54 percent of the preschool children had an employed mother compared to the national child health survey estimate of 50 percent.

The employment estimate was based on a 56 percent labor force participation rate for mothers with children under the age of 6 years (Bureau of Labor Statistics 1988), which was adjusted for unemployment and a difference in the average number of preschool children for employed and unemployed mothers (based on data from the Nebraska survey). The child care rates for children with employed mothers (99 percent) and with unemployed mothers (20 percent) from the national child health survey were then used to estimate the overall national child care rate of 62 percent.

[2]Other recent Nebraska data show slightly different employment rates for reasonably comparable groups of women. An employment rate of 62 percent was found for surveyed women in Douglas, Sarpy and Washington counties, aged 18 to 34 with a child under the age of 5 years in the household (unpublished data from the Omaha Conditions Survey, Center for Public Affairs Research 1990). That compares to an employment rate found in this survey of 59 percent for mothers of preschool children in Douglas county. Another data source shows an employment rate of 67 percent was found for women from counties other than Douglas, Sarpy and Washington, aged 18 to 35 with a child under the age of 6 years in the household (unpublished data from the Nebraska Labor Force Survey, Center for Public Affairs Research 1990). In this child care survey the employment rate for mothers in counties other than Douglas was 73 percent.

[3]In both surveys, parents identified their child care arrangement from a list of possibilities read to them by the interviewer. In the Nebraska survey, the category "day care center" preceded "preschool" in the list, whereas the order was reversed in the national survey. Parents using center-based care who failed to distinguish between the two categories might have responded positively to the first category presented.

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Appendix A
Survey Sample Design and Methodology

The 1990 Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey was based on telephone interviews with a sample of 600 Nebraska households with preschool children. The purpose of the survey was to provide statewide estimates of preschool child care rates of use, types of child care used and parents' views on their access to quality child care. In addition, the survey aimed to identify any problems of child care access for low income and rural families.

Sample Design

The sample was drawn from a two stage, stratified cluster design. In the first stage Nebraska counties were classified into eight strata based on population and income characteristics, and then subgroups of counties were randomly selected from the two strata which contained large numbers of counties.

Each Nebraska county was classified as above or below average in the ratio of children receiving Title XX low income family assistance (Nebraska Department of Social Services 1990a) to total children in the county 18 years of age and under (Nebraska Department of Education 1989; Nebraska State Data Center 1989). Overall, an estimated 4.2 children per 100 in Nebraska aged 18 and under received Title XX assistance. The 16 counties with child assistance ratios above the state average were designated as low income, leaving 77 counties in the middle-upper income category.

The counties in each group were further classified according to the population of the largest place in each county and whether or not it was part of a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) based on 1986 population estimates (Nebraska State Data Center 1988):

- rural – no place of 2,500 or more
- small urban – largest place 2,500 to 9,999
- large urban – largest place 10,000 to 49,999
- metropolitan – part of a metropolitan statistical area (Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, Lancaster and Dakota).

Table A.1 shows the number of Nebraska counties in each of the income and population categories.

The sample design set a target of 75 completed questionnaires from each of the eight strata, for a total of 600. It was estimated that for each completed survey, there would need to be a minimum of six households sampled (450 for each of the strata) because the available household listings included a high percentage without telephone numbers, and for many of those a telephone number could not be obtained through telephone book searches.

A smaller number of counties from the rural and small urban, middle-upper income strata were selected to minimize the number of communities for which telephone book

Table A.1 Number of Nebraska Counties by Income and Population Class: Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey, 1990

	Population Class of County				
	Rural	Small Urban	Large Urban	Metropolitan	Total
Income class:					
Low income	4	4	7	1	16
Middle-upper income	48	22	3	4	77
Total	52	26	10	5	93

searches would have to be conducted. In order to obtain at least 450 households from both of those groups, five rural counties and four small urban middle-upper income counties were randomly selected. All counties were included in the design from the other six strata. Altogether 32 counties were included in the survey, half of them low-income.

The second stage involved randomly selecting households from master household listings for each of the strata. Samples of Nebraska households with preschool age children were purchased from Metromail Corporation, a commercial market research firm. The first listing contained addresses of households with children 0 to 24 months of age compiled from hospital reports and other public records. The coverage on this listing was estimated to include about 80 percent of such households in Nebraska. Telephone numbers were available for only one third of the households. The other listing contained households with children two to five years of age, developed and maintained through a variety of sources, and screened to include only confirmed addresses. This listing was estimated to include only 35 percent of such households in Nebraska. Telephone numbers were available for a 85 percent of the households on that listing. Duplicate households between the listings were eliminated from the one covering children two to five years of age.

Based on census and previous survey data, an estimated 54 percent of households with preschool children have a child less than 2 years of age. In order to obtain a sample with a representative distribution of preschool children by age, the target number of interviews was set at 40 households from the younger age listing and 35 from the older age listing to total the 75 needed from each of strata.

Each of the two age group listings were classified into four county groups by population and then each subclassified into two county income groups for a total of 16 sublists. To insure an adequate number of sampled households to complete the target number of interviews, up to 350 households were randomly sampled per interview needed from each sublist. Some of the rural and small urban strata sublists had fewer than this number of households in which case 95 percent were randomly selected.

Survey Procedure

The telephone survey was conducted between March 12 and April 1, 1990 by Midwest Survey, Inc. a commercial market survey firm in Omaha. The households on each of the 16 sample lists were placed in a randomized order and subdivided into worklists of about 75 households each. The staff of Midwest Survey attempted to obtain the telephone

numbers missing from a list before any calls were made from it. Many of the households were listed under the mother's name, making it difficult to look up the phone number. When no exact match could be found by name and address, up to three telephone numbers for persons with the same last name, residing in the same community were recorded. The first of those households, if any, that had a preschool child was included in the survey.

Interviewers made up to three attempts to contact a household and interview the parent (or guardian) who had the most responsibility for child care, or knew the most about child care arrangements. If parents shared the responsibility equally, then the interview was conducted with either parent who was willing to participate. Households with no child present who was under the age of six years and had not yet started to school were excluded. If more than one preschool child resided in a household, the interviewer alternately asked the respondents to provide information about the youngest or the oldest one. The screening questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

Interviewers used as many of the worklists as were needed to meet the target numbers by strata and age group listing. When there were not enough listed households available to reach the target, additional names were drawn first from the other age group listing for that county class, then from the other county income group for the same population class, and then from the next highest population class to reach the overall target of 600 completed interviews.

Altogether, the interviewers used a total sample of 2247 household listings to obtain the 600 interviews. The interview rate of 27 percent was higher than expected, but ranged from 10 to 50 percent across the worklists. An additional 13 percent refused to participate, resulting in a response rate of 67 percent for contacted, eligible households. The other 60 percent of sampled households either had no obtainable phone number, could not be contacted within three attempts, or did not have a preschool child. Overall 55 percent of the completed interviews came from households on the younger age group listing (0 to 24 months), which was close to the target of 54 percent. Table A.2 presents the completed number of interviews for each of the strata.

Table A.2. Surveyed Counties and Number of Completed Interviews by County Strata: Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey, 1990

County Strata	Surveyed Counties	Completed Interviews
Rural:		
Low income	Harlan, Stanton, Furnas, Thurston	66
Middle-upper income	Furnas, Johnson, Nuckolls, Webster, Thayer	82
Small urban:		
Low income	Dawes, Dawson, Kimball, Richardson	76
Middle-upper income	Cherry, Hamilton, Holt, Red Willow	72
Large urban:		
Low income	Adams, Buffalo, Dodge, Gage, Hall, Lincoln, Scottsbluff	77
Middle-upper income	Box Butte, Madison, Platte	74
Metropolitan:		
Low income	Douglas	78
Middle-upper income	Dakota, Lancaster, Sarpy, Washington	75
Total		600

Weighting

The responses were weighted to produce statewide estimates based on the distribution of preschool age children across the strata. The estimates of preschool children were based on unpublished county level data from the 1989 school census (Nebraska Department of Education 1990). Counts of children by age residing in each county were adjusted for undercounting. The undercount percentages were calculated from comparisons of Nebraska statewide age counts from the 1980 school census (Nebraska Department of Education 1981) and from the 1980 population census (Bureau of the Census 1982), and from changes in counts by the school census for the same group of children between 1988 and 1989 (Nebraska Department of Education 1989; 1990). The estimate of the number of five year olds was further adjusted to account for the fact that approximately 42 percent of them would not have started to school at the time of the survey (based on a cutoff date of October 15 for children reaching the age of five to start kindergarten, and a survey start date of March 12). Table A.3 presents the proportions of Nebraska preschool children and interviews and the derived weights for each of the strata. Each response was weighted according to the strata to which it belonged.

For a few analyses by population class of county, an adjusted weight was used for rural and small urban counties. A subset of middle-upper income counties had been randomly selected from each of these two population classes, and then households were randomly selected from the county subsets. A comparison of child care arrangement data with records on licensed facilities for the counties in these two strata (Nebraska Department of Social Services 1990b) indicated that the most representative sample came by combining the low and middle-upper income counties within each population class for the purposes of weighting, rather than separate weights for each income class. The result was a weight of .55 for both of the rural strata and .70 for both of the small urban strata. This alternative weighting scheme was found to have no effect on the overall estimates or analyses by any other factor such as type of child care or income. Consequently the adjusted weights for rural and small urban county strata were used only for analyses that produced estimates by population class of county.

Table A.3. Proportions of Nebraska Preschool Children, Proportions of Completed Interviews and Weights for Survey County Strata: Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey, 1990

County Strata	Number of Preschool Children	Percent of Preschool Children	Percent of Responses	Weight
Rural low income	1,892	1.5	11.0	.136
Rural middle-upper income	15,634	12.1	13.7	.883
Small urban low income	2,995	2.3	12.7	.181
Small urban mid-upper income	19,381	15.0	12.0	1.250
Large urban low income	17,439	13.5	12.8	1.054
Large urban mid-upper income	7,255	5.6	12.3	.455
Metropolitan low income	36,540	28.4	13.0	2.185
Metropolitan mid-upper income	27,640	21.5	12.5	1.720
Total	128,819	99.9	100.0	

Characteristics of the Sample

The distribution of selected characteristics of the surveyed respondents and households based on weighted sample are presented in table A.4. There are few sources of data for Nebraska households with preschool children for comparison with the survey sample on characteristics other than age and sex of preschool children.

Respondent's relationship and child care responsibility. Most of the respondents were mothers, while some fathers, most of whom shared child care responsibility with the mother, and a foster parent responded to the survey. In a few cases, an employed father responded when the mother, an unemployed primary caregiver, should have been the respondent. In those four percent of the cases, questions which needed to be answered by the primary caregiver (e.g., ideal child care and employment status) were set to missing.

Age of child. When compared with the adjusted age distribution of preschool children from the 1989 Nebraska School Census (described above), the survey sample included a disproportionate number of one year olds and four year olds. However, when grouped for the analysis into the categories: less than one, one to two, and three to five year olds,

Table A.4 Characteristics of Respondents and Households: Nebraska Preschool Child Care Survey, 1990

Characteristics	Percent Distribution
Respondent's relationship to child	
Mother	81.3
Father	18.4
Foster parent	0.3
Total	100.0
Respondent's caregiver status	
Primary caregiver	96.0
Spouse of primary caregiver	4.0
Total	100.0
Age of selected preschool child at last birthday:	
Less than 1 year old	18.9
1 year old	23.8
2 years old	15.3
3 years old	14.9
4 years old	19.1
5 years old (not in school)	8.0
Total	100.0
Sex of selected preschool child:	
Girl	45.9
Boy	54.1
Total	100.0
Marital status of primary caregiver:	
Married, spouse present	94.4
Separated or spouse absent	1.1
Divorced	2.8
Widowed	0.0
Single, never married	1.7
Total	100.0

Characteristics	Percent Distribution
Number of preschool children in household:	
1	61.9
2	33.2
3	4.6
4	0.3
Total	100.0
Mean number of preschool children in household	1.4
Mean number of children 18 years old and younger in household	2.3
Annual household income:	
Less than $10,000	2.6
$10,000 - $14,999	4.6
$15,000 - $19,999	13.8
$20,000 - $24,999	13.1
$25,000 - $29,999	16.0
$30,000 - $34,999	14.6
$35,000 and above	35.3
Total	100.0
Mother's employment status:	
Full-time employment	50.0
Part-time employment	18.2
Not employed	31.8
Total	100.0

the sample distribution did not differ more than four percentage points from the estimated one for the Nebraska preschool population.

Sex of child. The survey sample included a disproportionate number of boys, but within the sampling error range of four percent. No differences were found by sex of child in the rate of child care use or the distribution of child care arrangements.

Marital status of primary caregiver. A very high percentage of the surveyed households had two parents present. There are no available data to show what this statistic is statewide for such households with preschool children, but it is identical to what was found in the 1988 child care survey (Funk 1990). We believe divorced and single (never-married) mothers may be underrepresented in the sample, because they are less likely to appear on household listings prepared by commercial market research firms. For example, a mother may move to another residence or community after separation. Divorced and single mothers frequently live with their parents. Low income single mothers may not have a telephone.

Number of preschool children. The percent of households with more than one preschool child is identical in this sample to the one from the 1988 survey. The average of 1.4 preschool children for households with any preschool child is comparable to the average for Nebraska households with children under six of age, from the 1980 census (Bureau of the Census 1982).

Number of children 18 and under. The average number of children in the household 18 years old and younger is similar to the sample for the 1988 survey. No other Nebraska data were available for comparison.

Household income. The distribution of household income was similar to that found in the 1988 survey, and again, there is no other comparison data available for Nebraska households with preschool children. However, we do believe that low income households are underrepresented. An estimated 4.2 percent of Nebraska children 18 years of age and younger receive Title XX assistance in 1989 (see 'Sample Design' section above for sources of data). We presume that rate is higher for preschool children than school age children, since single mothers with preschool children are less likely to be employed full time than those with school age children (National Research Council 1990). Only 1.5 percent of the surveyed households reported incomes of less than $10,000 and either had no employed parent (and presumed to have received Title XX assistance) or received a child care supplement from the Department of Social Services (DSS). Another 0.6 percent of households had incomes between $10,000 and $15,000 and received a child care supplement. Altogether, an estimated 2.1 percent of surveyed households received assistance to low income families. We believe this should have been at least 4.2 percent, and probably higher to be representative of Nebraska households with preschool children.

Mother's employment status. A high percentage of surveyed mothers were employed. While 68 percent is substantially higher than estimates based on national data (Reed 1988; National Center for Health Statistics 1990), recent Nebraska data provide estimates only slightly lower for women aged 18 - 35 in households with preschool age children (see note 2 at end of main report). We believe that the actual employment rate may be closer to 65 percent.

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Appendix B
Questionnaire

SCREENING FORM

CHILD CARE SURVEY
CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH
MARCH 1990

Interviewer Name: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Zip Code: _____
List Code: _____
Date: _____
Interview Number: _____

[IF CHILD ANSWERS PHONE ASK TO SPEAK TO THE MOTHER. IF SHE IS NOT THERE, ASK TO SPEAK TO THE FATHER OR ANOTHER GROWN-UP. IF NO ADULTS THERE, CALL BACK LATER.

[TO ADULT ANSWERING PHONE]
Hello, my name is _____. I'm working with the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Center for Public Affairs Research. We're conducting a survey on child care arrangements and needs of Nebraska families with preschool age children.

S1. Are there any children living in this household who are LESS than 6 years old and have NOT yet started kindergarten?

[IF YES, CONTINUE]

[IF NO, SAY: Thank you very much but we are only surveying families with preschool age children today. Goodbye. CODE "NO CHILD" ON TELEPHONE LOG].

S2. I need to speak to whichever parent or guardian has the MOST responsibility for child care arrangements and decisions. Are you that parent?

[IF YES, CONTINUE]

[IF PARENTS SHARE EQUALLY] Which of you could best answer questions about child care arrangements and needs? [IF BOTH CAN, THEN TRY TO INTERVIEW WHOEVER WILL COOPERATE]

[IF NO: ASK TO SPEAK TO THE ONE WHO HAS THE MOST RESPONSIBILITY]

[IF THE RESPONDENT MUST BE CALLED TO THE PHONE: REPEAT THE ENTIRE INTRODUCTION]

[NOTE: SURVEY CAN BE GIVEN TO GUARDIAN OR FOSTER PARENT, BUT IS NOT TO BE GIVEN TO A BABYSITTER OR OTHER CHILD CARE PROVIDER, OR ANY RELATIVE, SUCH AS A GRANDMOTHER, WHO DOES NOT HAVE CUSTODY OF THE CHILD]

S3. Your household has been chosen at random from Nebraska households with preschool age children. Would you be willing to spend approximately 10 to 20 minutes to provide us with information about your child care arrangements, needs and preferences? Let me assure you that your responses will be confidential and anonymous, as by law they must.

[IF YES CONTINUE]

[IF NO, OR NOT AT THIS TIME, TRY TO ARRANGE A MORE CONVENIENT TIME TO CALL BACK.]
[IF PERSON REFUSES TO PARTICIPATE, SAY:
Thank you very much for your time; Goodbye. CODE "REFUSED'"

Thank you. Please feel free to ask questions at any time. Okay?
First I need to confirm your telephone number and zip code:
[GET CONFIRMATION AND RECORD AT TOP OF THIS SHEET]

FORM 1. ALL RESPONDENTS Interview Number_____

1a. [RECORD ZIP CODE] _ _ _ _ _

1b. [RECORD FROM SCREENING QUESTION WHETHER THE RESPONDENT IS THE MAIN CHILD CARE PROVIDER OR SHARES EQUALLY WITH THE OTHER PARENT]

1 main child care provider
2 shares equally with other parent
8 not clear from screening procedure

[SAY]: First I need to ask you some general questions about your family.

2. How many children under the age of 6 who have NOT started kindergarten are currently living in this household?

1 [GO TO 5]
2
3
_ other [WRITE IN]

[MORE THAN ONE PRESCHOOL CHILD]

3. [ALTERNATELY SELECT YOUNGEST AND OLDEST CHILD FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH MORE THAN ONE PRESCHOOL AGE CHILD. IF LAST TIME, THE YOUNGEST WAS CHOSEN, SELECT THE OLDEST THIS TIME, AND VICE VERSA. RECORD ON CHECK LIST WHICH ONE WAS SELECTED FOR THIS HOUSEHOLD]

1 youngest
2 oldest

4. [SAY] I'm going to be asking you questions about child care for your (youngest/oldest) preschool age child:

[IN THE CASE OF TWINS BEING SELECTED, USE DELIVERY ORDER TO IDENTIFY THE YOUNGEST AND OLDEST]

5. What is that child's first name? _____

[NO QUESTIONS 6 AND 7]

8. (CHILD'S NAME) is a (boy or girl)?

1 boy
2 girl

9. How old was (CHILD'S NAME) on (his/her) last birthday?
[RECORD MONTHS IF LESS THAN 1 YEAR]

0 under 1 year
__ months
1 year
2 years
3 years
4 years
5 years

[IF ONLY ONE PRESCHOOL CHILD GO TO 11]

[IF MORE THAN ONE PRESCHOOL CHILD CONTINUE WITH 10]

10. How old (was/were) your other preschool age child(ren) at last birthday?
[CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

0 under 1 year
1 year
2 years
3 years
4 years
5 years

11. What is your relationship to (CHILD'S NAME)?

1 mother
2 father
3 stepmother
4 grandmother
5 other [WRITE IN]

_____

12. What were you doing most of LAST WEEK? Were you working, keeping house, going to school or something else?

01 working [GO TO 14]
02 keeping house/caring for own children
03 going to school

something else--- What was that?

04 on sick leave, vacation or other paid leave [GO TO 14]

05 looking for work -------|
06 in job training |---[GO TO FORM 2-B, UNEMPLOYED]
07 on maternity leave------|

08 temporarily laid off
09 other [WRITE IN]

_____

88 don't know

13. Did you do any work at all LAST WEEK for pay or for a family business?

1 yes
2 no [GO TO 23]
8 don't know [GO TO 23]

14. About how many hours do you USUALLY work each week at all jobs and businesses?

000 none, usually don't work [GO TO FORM 2-B, UNEMPLOYED]

_ _ _ [WRITE IN] [IF 1 TO 34 GO TO 15]
[IF 35 OR MORE GO TO 16]

888 don't know ------- 14a. Do you work 35 hours a week or more?
1 yes [GO TO 16]
2 no [GO TO 15]
8 don't know [GO TO 16]

15. What is your main reason for working less than 35 hours a week?

[READ LIST]
1 can you find only part-time work?
2 can you find only part-time child care?
3 do you want only part-time work?
5 or something else? [WRITE IN]

_____

8 don't know

16. Do you usually work any hours at home for any job or business?

1 yes ---16a. On average, how many hours a week? _ _ _ [WRITE IN]
888
2 no
8 don't know

17. Do you usually work at more than one job or business?

1 yes [SAY]: The following 5 questions pertain to your PRINCIPAL job or business that is, the one at which you work the most hours.
2 no
3 don't know

18. Do you work any evenings or at nights on a regular basis?

1 yes [THIS REFERS TO ANY HOURS WORKED BETWEEN
2 no 7 IN THE EVENING AND 7 IN THE MORNING]
8 don't know

19. Do you work any weekend hours on a regular basis?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

20. Are you self-employed, or do you work for someone else?

1 self-employed [GO TO FORM 2-A, EMPLOYED]
2 work for someone else
8 don't know

21. Does your employer provide child care supplements or vouchers as a benefit?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

22. Does your employer provide a child-care facility at your work-place?

1 yes
2 no ---[GO TO FORM 2-A, EMPLOYED]
8 don't know

[DO NOT CONTINUE THROUGH]

NOT CURRENTLY EMPLOYED

23. Have you looked for work during the past four weeks?
    1 yes [GO TO FORM 2-B, UNEMPLOYED]
    2 no
    8 don't know

24. Do you want a regular job now, either full-time or part-time?
    1 yes
    2 maybe/depends
    3 no [GO TO FORM 2-B, UNEMPLOYED]
    8 don't know [GO TO FORM 2-B, UNEMPLOYED]

25. What are the reasons you have not looked for a job lately?
    [RECORD RESPONSE AND CIRCLE ALL REASONS MENTIONED.]

    1 believes none available/ couldn't find any
    2 lacks schooling, training, skills, experience
    3 can't arrange child care
    4 in school or other training
    5 physical disability/ill health
    6 already has job, is waiting for it to start up
    7 other [WRITE IN] _____
    8 don't know

    --[GO TO FORM 2-B, UNEMPLOYED]

[GO TO FORM 2-B, UNEMPLOYED]

[NO QUESTIONS 26 - 29]

FORM 2. Slightly different versions of Form 2 were administered to employed and unemploye respondents. Question numbers preceeded by the letter "A" appeared only on the form for EMPLOYED RESPONDENTS. Those preceeded by the letter "B" appeared only on the form for UNEMPLOYED RESPONDENTS. All other questions appeared on both versions of Form 2.

Interview Number: _____

30. What is your marital status?

[READ LIST]
- 1 married
- 3 separated
- 4 divorced
- 5 widowed
- 6 single
- 8 don't know

---[GO TO 44]

31. Is your [husband/wife] currently residing with you?
- 1 yes
- 2 no [GO TO 44]
- 8 don't know [GO TO 44]

32. Is your [husband/wife] currently employed or working in a family business?
- 1 yes
- 2 no [GO TO 42]
- 8 don't know [GO TO 42]

33. Does [he/she] usually work 35 hours or more a week counting all jobs and businesses?
- 1 yes [GO TO 35]
- 2 no
- 8 don't know [GO TO 35]

34. What is [his/her] main reason for working less than less than 35 hours a week?

[READ LIST]
- 1 can [he/she] find only part-time work?
- 3 does [he/she] wants only part-time work?
- 4 or something else? [WRITE IN]

  _____
- 8 don't know

35. Does [he/she] usually work any hours at home for any job or business?
- 1 yes ---35a. On average, how many hours a week? _ _ _ [WRITE IN]
- 2 no
- 888 don't know
- 8 don't know

36. Does [he/she] currently work at more than one job or business?
- 1 yes [SAY:] The following 5 questions pertain to [his/her] PRINCIPAL job or business that is the one at which [he/she] works the most hours.
- 2 no
- 8 don't know

37. Does [he/she] work any evenings or nights on a regular basis?
- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 8 don't know

[THIS REFERS TO ANY HOURS WORKED BETWEEN 7 IN THE EVENING AND 7 IN THE MORNING.]

38. Does [he/she] work any weekend hours on a regular basis?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

39. Is [he/she] self-employed, or does [he/she] work for someone else?

1 self-employed [GO TO 44]
2 works for someone else
8 don't know

40. Does [his/her] employer provide child care supplements or vouchers as a benefit?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

41. Does [his/her] employer provide a child-care facility at [his/her] work-place?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

--[GO TO 44]

[DO NOT CONTINUE THROUGH]

[SPOUSE NOT CURRENTLY EMPLOYED]

42. What was [he/she] doing most of last week? Was [he/she] going to school, looking for work, or something else?

03 going to school
05 looking for work [GO TO 44]

something else?

What was that?

02 keeping house/child care
06 unable to work [GO TO 44]
08 temporarily laid off
09 other [WRITE IN] _____

88 don't know

43. Has [he/she] looked for work in the past four weeks?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

[CONTINUE]

A-44. [WRITE IN CHILD'S NAME FROM FORM 1, PAGE 1 _____]
During the HOURS you are WORKING, where is (CHILD'S NAME)'s MAIN child care arrangement located?

[NOTE: MARK ONLY 1. IF MORE THAN ONE CURRENT ARRANGEMENT, IDENTIFY THE ONE WHERE THE CHILD SPENDS THE MOST TIME, OR, IF EQUAL TIME, THE ONE HE/SHE HAS HAD THE LONGEST]

[READ LIST]

1 in your home [GO TO 45]
2 in someone else's home [GO TO 46]
3 in a daycare center
4 in a head start program ----[GO TO 65]
5 in a preschool
6 or somewhere else? [WRITE IN] _____ _____ --[GO TO 44a]
8 don't know

A-44a. Is this an organized child care facility or program, or an informal arrangement?
1 organized child care facility [GO TO 65]
2 informal child care arrangement [GO TO 46]
8 don't know [GO TO 65]

B-44. [WRITE IN CHILD'S NAME FROM FORM 1, PAGE 1] _____
Besides yourself, does someone else provide child care for (CHILD'S NAME) on a REGULARLY SCHEDULED basis EACH WEEK?

[NOTE: DO NOT INCLUDE ANY CHILD CARE THAT IS NOT REGULARLY SCHEDULED EACH WEEK]
1 yes
2 no [GO TO 106]
8 don't know [GO TO 106]

B-44a. What is the main reason someone else takes care of [CHILD'S NAME] on a REGULAR basis?

1 respondent is in school
2 respondent is in job training
3 respondent is looking for work
4 respondent needs time to do other things
5 wants child to be in daycare/preschool setting
6 child has special physical/developmental care needs
7 other [WRITE IN] _____
8 don't know

B-44b. During this time where is (CHILD'S NAME)'s MAIN child care arrangement located?

[NOTE: MARK ONLY 1. IF MORE THAN ONE CURRENT ARRANGEMENT, IDENTIFY THE ONE WHERE THE CHILD SPENDS THE MOST TIME, OR, IF EQUAL TIME, THE ONE HE/SHE HAS HAD THE LONGEST]

[READ LIST]

1 in your home [GO TO 45]
2 in someone else's home [GO TO 46]
3 in a daycare center
4 in a head start program
5 in a preschool
---[GO TO 65]
6 or somewhere else? [WRITE IN] _____ _____
8 don't know
---[GO TO 44c]

B-44c. Is this an organized child care facility or program, or an informal arrangement?

1 organized child care facility [GO TO 65]
2 informal child care arrangement [GO TO 46]
8 don't know [GO TO 65]

[DO NOT CONTINUE THROUGH]

[IN OWN HOME]

45. Who is the main person caring for (CHILD'S NAME) in this arrangement during the HOURS YOU WORK: yourself, another family member, relative, friend, neighbor or someone else?

01 self while working----------
02 spouse--Is [he/she] working at home while caring for [CHILD'S NAME]?
   02 no
   03 yes
04 child's brother or sister -- 45a. How old?
   _ _ years old
05 relative--Which one?
   05 child's grandmother ---[GO TO 58]
   06 child's aunt
   07 other [WRITE IN] _____
   08 don't know
09 friend
10 neighbor----------

11 some other babysitter/child care provider [GO TO 54]
88 don't know [GO TO 54]

[DO NOT CONTINUE THROUGH]

[SOMEONE ELSE'S HOME]

46. How many minutes away is it from your home?
_ _ [WRITE IN]
88 don't know

A-47. Do you usually take [CHILD'S NAME] to child care on your way to work?
1 yes
2 no [GO TO 49]
8 don't know [GO TO 49]

A-48. How many minutes does that add to your travel time to work?
_ _ [WRITE IN]
88 don't know

A-49. Who is the main person caring for (CHILD'S NAME) in this arrangement during the HOURS YOU WORK: a relative, friend, neighbor or someone else?

05 relative--Which one?----------
   05 child's grandmother ---[GO TO 58]
   06 child's aunt
   07 other [WRITE IN] _____
   08 don't know
09 friend
10 neighbor----------

11 some other babysitter/child care provider
88 don't know

B-49. Who is the main person caring for (CHILD'S NAME) in this arrangement: a relative, friend, neighbor or someone else?

5 relative--Which one?
- 5 child's grandmother
- 6 child's aunt
- 7 other [WRITE IN] _____
- 8 don't know

9 friend

10 neighbor

---[GO TO 58]

11 some other babysitter/child care provider

88 don't know

[NO QUESTIONS 50 TO 53]

54. Did you know this person before you first used (him/her) for child care?
1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

55. How did you first locate this child care provider?
1 already knew the person was a child care provider
2 referral by relative/friend/neighbor/coworker
3 ad in newspaper/yellow pages/bulletin board
4 child care referral service
5 social services referral
6 employer referral
7 other (WRITE IN) _____
8 don't know

56. Did you get a reference either directly or indirectly from a parent who had used this child care provider?
1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

[NO QUESTION 57]

58. Altogether, how many of your own children, including (CHILD'S NAME), are currently being cared for in this arrangement?
1 just (CHILD'S NAME)
2
3
_ other [WRITE IN]
8 don't know

59. Are there any children other than your own in this care arrangement?
1 yes
2 no [GO TO 77]
8 don't know [GO TO 61]

60. From how many families not counting yours?

1
2
3
_ other [WRITE IN]
8 don't know

61. Altogether, how many children, including (CHILD'S NAME) usually are cared for at the same time in this arrangement?

_ _ [WRITE IN]
88 don't know

[SKIP TO 63 IF CARE PROVIDER IN THIS ARRANGEMENT IS CHILD'S PARENT, BROTHER OR SISTER]
[OTHERWISE CONTINUE]

62. How many of these children are the care provider's own children?

0 none
1
2
3
_ other [WRITE IN]
8 don't know

63. Is there usually more than one adult caring for the children at the same time?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

64. Is this arrangement in a registered day care home?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

---[GO TO 77]

[DO NOT CONTINUE THROUGH]

[DAY CARE CENTER OR PRESCHOOL OR OTHER]

65. How many minutes away is that place from your home?

__ [WRITE IN]
88 don't know

A-66. Do you usually take [CHILD'S NAME] to child care on your way to work?

1 yes
2 no [GO TO 68]
8 don't know [GO TO 88]

A-67. How many minutes does that add to you travel time to work?

__ [WRITE IN]
88 don't know

68. Who owns or sponsers this child care facility?

[READ LIST]

01 a private individual
02 a day care corporation
03 a a church
04 a public school
05 a non profit organization
06 a local, state or federal government agency
07 a business or organization for its employee's children
08 other [WRITE IN] _____

88 don't know

[NO QUESTIONS 69 TO 71]

72. How did you first locate this child care arrangement?

1 already knew about this child care facility
2 referral by relative/friend/neighbor/coworker
3 ad in newspaper/yellow pages/ or bulletin board
4 child care referral service
5 social services referral
6 employer provided or referral
7 other (WRITE IN) _____
8 don't know

73. Did you get a reference either directly or indirectly from a parent who had used this child care facility?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

74. Altogether, how many of your own children, including (CHILD'S NAME), are currently being cared for in this arrangement?

1 just (CHILD'S NAME)
2
3
_ other [WRITE IN]
8 don't know

75. Approximately how many children usually are cared for in the same group as (CHILD'S NAME) at the same time?

_ _ [WRITE IN]
88 don't know

76. How many persons are caring for that group at the same time?

1
2
_ other [WRITE IN]
8 don't know

[ALL CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS]

77. How many HOURS a week is (CHILD'S NAME) usually cared for in this arrangement?

_ _ _ [WRITE IN HOURS]
888 don't know

[SKIP TO 82 IF CARE PROVIDER IN THIS ARRANGEMENT IS CHILD'S PARENT, BROTHER OR SISTER]
[OTHERWISE CONTINUE]

78. On average, what is the fee charged PER WEEK for (CHILD'S NAME) care in this arrangement?

CHARGE PER WEEK:

000 nothing
_ _ _ [WRITE IN]
888 don't know--- 78a. What is the fee per hour?

___.__ [WRITE IN]
888 don't know

[NOTE: IF FEE IS SUBSIDIZED BY EMPLOYER OR DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, RECORD THE AMOUNT CHARGED BY THE CARE PROVIDER, NOT THE AMOUNT THE RESPONDENT PERSONALLY PAYS.]

[NO QUESTIONS 79 TO 81]

82. How long has [CHILD'S NAME] been cared for in this particular arrangement?

_ years __ months [WRITE IN YEARS AND MONTHS]
8 don't know

83. Before choosing this child care arrangement for [CHILD'S NAME], did you check out or consider any other specific arrangements?

1 yes
2 no [GO TO 86]
8 don't know [GO TO 86]

84. What other child care arrangements did you consider?
[CIRCLE ALL THAT ARE MENTIONED]

1 another family member or relative
2 care by a babysitter in child's home
3 care in someone else's home
4 care in a registered family day care home
5 care in a licenced day care center
6 care in a preschool
7 other [WRITE IN] _____
8 don't know

85. Why did you choose [CHILD'S NAME]'s current arrangement instead?
[WRITE IN RESPONSE AND CIRLE ALL REASONS GIVEN]

_____

_____

01	did not want to impose on family member or relative----	
02	wanted child to have other playmates	
03	wanted an educational/developmental program	
04	wanted a home/family/small group setting	
05	wanted a parent/family member to care for the child	
06	already had a child cared for by the current provider	---[GO TO 93]
07	had more/a lot of confidence in the current provider	
08	wanted trained teachers/care providers	
09	the current arrangement had a good/ better reputation	
10	did not know enough about the other	
11	the other was full	
12	the other was not as convenient	
13	the other was not available for all the hours I needed	
14	the other was more/ too expensive	
15	other reason	
88	don't know----------	

[DO NOT CONTINUE THROUGH]

[DID NOT CONSIDER OTHER ARRANGEMENTS]

86. What various types of arrangements would have been available if you had been interested in using them?
[CIRCLE ALL THAT ARE MENTIONED]

0 nothing else available [GO TO 93]
1 another family member or relative
2 care by a babysitter in child's home
3 care in someone else's home
4 care in a registered family day care home
5 care in a licenced day care center
6 care in a preschool
7 other [WRITE IN]

_____

8 don't know

87. Why did you choose [CHILD'S NAME]'s current arrangement instead?
[WRITE IN RESPONSE AND CIRLE ALL REASONS GIVEN]

_____

_____

01 did not want to impose on family member or relative
02 wanted child to have other playmates
03 wanted an educational/developmental program
04 wanted a home/family/small group setting
05 wanted a parent/family member to care for the child
06 already had a child cared for by the current provider
07 had more/a lot of confidence in the current provider
08 wanted trained teachers/care providers
09 the current arrangement had a good/ better reputation
10 did not know enough about the other
11 the other was full
12 the other was not as convenient
13 the other was not available for all the hours I needed
14 the other was more/ too expensive
15 other reason
88 don't know

[NO QUESTIONS 88 - 92]

93. Is (CHILD'S NAME) regularly cared for in any additional arrangements other than the main one we've been discussing?

1 yes
2 no [GO TO 95]
8 don't know [GO TO 95]

94. Where is (he/she) cared for in any other arrangements?
[READ LIST AND CIRCLE ALL RESPONSES]

-----1 in your home
2 in someone else's home
3 in a day care center
4 in a preschool
5 in a head start program
-----6 other [WRITE IN]

_____

8 don't know

A-95. Who usually cares for (CHILD'S NAME) when [he/she] is ill during a time you are working?

1 self stays home from work
2 spouse stays home from work
3 usual provider (including self or spouse) still cares
4 relative/friend/neighbor cares
5 other [WRITE IN]

_____

8 don't know

A-96. What other options would you generally have when [CHILD'S NAME] is ill?
[CIRCLE ALL RESPONSES]

1 self stay home from work
2 spouse stay home from work
3 usual provider still provide care
4 relative/friend/neighbor provide care
5 or other [WRITE IN]

_____

8 don't know

[NO QUESTIONS 97 TO 100]

101. Did you experience any of the following problems in making your current child care arrangement for (CHILD'S NAME)? Please respond YES or NO to each of the following problems:
[CIRCLE 1=YES, 2=NO 8=DON'T KNOW, FOR EACH ONE]

	Yes	No	DK	
a.	1	2	8	not enough available child care providers
b.	1	2	8	knowing how to locate child care providers
c.	1	2	8	knowing how to chose among child care options
d.	1	2	8	finding high quality child care
e.	1	2	8	finding an affordable arrangement
f.	1	2	8	finding care for the hours or days that you needed it
g.	1	2	8	finding care in a convenient location
h.	1	2	8	finding care for more than one child
i.	1	2	8	finding care for an infant

102. Was anything else a problem for you in arranging child care for (CHILD'S NAME)?

1 yes [WRITE IN] _____

_____

2 no
8 don't know

[SKIP TO 105 IF THE CARE PROVIDER IN THE MAIN ARRANGEMENT IS THE CHILD'S PARENT, BROTHER OR SISTER]
[OTHERWISE CONTINUE]

103. I'm going ask for your opinion now about several aspects of (CHILD'S NAME)'s main child care arrangement. Please indicate whether you STRONGLY AGREE, AGREE, DISAGREE, STRONGLY DISAGREE with each of the following statements:
[CIRCLE 1 = STRONGLY AGREE, 2 = AGREE, 3 = DISAGREE, 4 = STRONGLY DISAGREE, 8 = DON'T KNOW FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING]

	SA	A	D	SD	DK	In (his/her) main child care arrangement (CHILD'S NAME):
a.	1	2	3	4	8	has suitable toys and games for playing
b.	1	2	3	4	8	is poorly supervised
c.	1	2	3	4	8	spends too much time watching T.V.
d.	1	2	3	4	8	is given nutritous meals and snacks
e.	1	2	3	4	8	is cared for by someone who is unreliable
f.	1	2	3	4	8	receives a lot of affection and nurturing
g.	1	2	3	4	8	gets enough physical exercise
h.	1	2	3	4	8	is learning how to get on well with other children
i.	1	2	3	4	8	is cared for by someone with different attitudes about child rearing and discipline
j.	1	2	3	4	8	is cared for by someone with adequate medical emergency skills
k.	1	2	3	4	8	is developing basic skills for learning readiness
l.	1	2	3	4	8	lacks enough quality time with the care provider
m.	1	2	3	4	8	is exposed to values which conflict with your family's values
n.	1	2	3	4	8	has safe play areas and equipment
o.	1	2	3	4	8	might be exposed to a serious infectious disease
p.	1	2	3	4	8	is sometimes mistreated by other children
q.	1	2	3	4	8	is cared for by someone who keeps you well informed and involved in the care arrangement.

104. Overall, how would you rate the quality of care in (CHILD'S NAME)'s main child care arrangement: EXCELLENT, GOOD, FAIR, or POOR.

1 excellent
2 good
3 fair
4 poor
8 don't know

104a. In general, how easy is it for you to afford the cost of (CHILD'S NAME)'s main child care arrangement: VERY EASY, MODERATELY EASY, MODERATELY DIFFICULT, VERY DIFFICULT?

1 very easy
2 moderately easy
3 moderately difficult
4 very difficult
8 don't know

105. Overall, how would you rate the CONVENIENCE of (CHILD'S NAME)'s main child care arrangement: VERY CONVENIENT, CONVENIENT, INCONVENIENT, VERY INCONVENIENT.

1 very convenient
2 convenient
3 inconvenient
4 very inconvenient
8 don't know

106. Overall, how would you rate the NUMBER OF AVAILABLE CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS in your community: MORE THAN ADEQUATE, ADEQUATE, INADEQUATE, VERY INADEQUATE

1 more than adequate
2 adequate
3 inadequate
4 very inadequate
8 don't know

107a. Besides [his/her] parents, how many regular care providers has (CHILD'S NAME) had since (he/she) was born?

0 none
1
2
3
_ other [WRITE IN]
8 don't know

107b. About how long have you lived in or near your current community?

00 less than a year
_ _ years [WRITE IN]
77 all my life
88 don't know

A-108. Ideally, what type of child care arrangement or combination of arrangements would you like to have for (CHILD'S NAME) DURING THE HOURS YOU WORK? [RECORD RESPONSE AND CHECK ALL TYPES MENTIONED]

_____

_____

01 self while working
02 by spouse
03 by other family member or relative
04 by babysitter/nanny in CHILD'S home
05 by friend or neighbor
06 in informal day care home
07 in registered day care home
08 in day care center
09 in head start program
10 in preschool
11 other [WRITE IN]

_____

88 don't know

B-108a. Under ideal circumstances, how many hours a week, if any, would you like (CHILD'S NAME) to be cared for by someone other than yourself?

0 none [GO TO 109]
_ _ [WRITE IN hours]
88 don't know [GO TO 109]

B-108b. Ideally, what type of child care arrangement or combination of arrangements would you like to have for (CHILD'S NAME) during that time?
[RECORD RESPONSE AND CIRCLE ALL TYPES MENTIONED]

01 self while working
02 by spouse
03 by other family member or relative
04 by babysitter/nanny in CHILD'S home
05 by friend or neighbor
06 in informal day care home
07 in registered day care home
08 in day care center
09 in head start program
10 in preschool
11 other [WRITE IN] _____

88 don't know

109. Under IDEAL circumstances, would you prefer to be employed full time, part time or not at all before (CHILD'S NAME) starts to kindergarten?

1 full time
2 part time
3 not at all
8 don't know

110. The state of Nebraska soon may offer a variety of short training courses for child care providers in each state legislative district. Please indicate whether you think each of the following topics should be REQUIRED or OPTIONAL training for anyone who cares for other people's children.
[CIRCLE 1=REQUIRED, 2=OPTIONAL, 3=DEPENDS ON NUMBER OF CHILDREN 8=DON'T KNOW]

	R	O	DEP	DK	[READ THE FOLLOWING TOPICS AND RECORD RESPONSE TO EACH]
a.	1	2	3	8	observing and assessing early childhood development
b.	1	2	3	8	child supervision and management
c.	1	2	3	8	preparing nutritious meals and snacks
d.	1	2	3	8	development of infant and early childhood programs
e.	1	2	3	8	parent involvement and communication
f.	1	2	3	8	CPR and other emergency first aid
g.	1	2	3	8	special needs of developmentally handicapped children
h.	1	2	3	8	providing multicultural experiences
i.	1	2	3	8	safe indoor and outdoor activity areas
j.	1	2	3	8	choosing age appropriate toys and activities
k.	1	2	3	8	communicating with children
l.	1	2	3	8	infectious disease control

110a. Are there OTHER topics you think should be REQUIRED training for child care providers?

1 yes [WRITE IN] _____
_____
2 no
8 don't know

111. Do you think registration should be required for everyone who provides child care in their home?

1 yes
2 no ----- --111a. When should registration be required?
3 depends-- [WRITE IN] _____
8 don't know 8 don't know

[SAY:] Finally I want to ask you a few questions related to the financial aspect of of child care for your family. Let me repeat that your responses will be completely confidential and anonymous. You are under no obligation, of course, to answer any question you would rather not.

112. Altogether, how much do you usually spend PER WEEK on ALL your child care arrangements for your PRESCHOOL age children?

000 none
_ _ _ [WRITE IN DOLLARS]
888 don't know

113. How many school-age children 5 to 18 years old do you have in this household? [DON'T COUNT 5 YEAR OLDS WHO HAVE NOT STARTED KINDERGARTEN]

0 none [GO TO 117]
1
2
_ other [WRITE IN]
8 don't know

114. Altogether, how much do you usually spend PER WEEK week on child care for your school-age children?

000 none
_ _ _ [WRITE IN DOLLARS]
888 don't know

[NO QUESTIONS 115 AND 116]

117. Altogether, what was the general level of your family's annual income, before taxes, in 1989: Was it

[READ LIST]

1 less than $10,000
2 $10,000 to $14,000
3 $15,000 to $19,000
4 $20,000 to $24,000
5 $25,000 to $29,000
6 $30,000 to $34,000
7 $35,000 or more?
8 don't know

118. Did you have any child care expenses in 1989?

1 yes
2 no [GO TO 120]
8 don't know [GO TO 120]

119. Are you claiming a state or federal income tax credit for child care expenses in 1989?

1 yes
2 no
8 don't know

120. Do you receive a CHILD CARE supplement or voucher from the department of social services:

1 yes
2 no [GO TO 122]
8 don't know [GO TO 122]

121. Does that cover all your child care expenses or just part of them?

1 all
2 part
8 don't know

122. [SAY:] That's all the questions I have. We appreciate very much the time you you gave us in responding to this child care survey. The information provided by Nebraska parents such as yourself will be very useful in helping us learn about the the availability of quality preschool child care. Thank you very much. Goodbye.

[NOTE: FOR ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SURVEY THEY CAN CALL US AT (402) 595-2311]

Appendix C

Nebraska Preschool Child Care Policy Workshop
July 18, 1990
Lincoln, Nebraska

Participants

Nicole Abbott, Senator Bob Kerrey's Office
Dorothy Anderson, Representative Bereuter's Office
JoAnne Begley, Head Start - Gering, Nebraska
Phyllis Chandler, Family Services Associates, Omaha
Ray Clark, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research
Judith Cross ,UNO Child Care Center
Anita Dankert, Nebraska Family Day Care Association, Palmer, Nebraska
C.K. Eberspacher, Senator LaVon Crosby's Office
Harriet Egertson, Nebraska Department of Education
Patricia Funk, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research
Kris Gordon, Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women
Melanie Hayes, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research
Bonnie Hines, Child Care Center - Central Community College-Platte Campus
John Lovelace, Child and Family Development Corporation, Omaha
Jim Maney, Nebraska Department of Social Services
Rose Meile, Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women
Kim Nore, Nebraska Department of Social Services
Linda O'Hara, Office of the Mayor - Omaha
Janet Phelan, Midwest Child Care Home Association, Omaha
Connie Spellman, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
Pallavi Trivedi, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research
Fran White, Senator J. James Exon's Office